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THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

A SYSTEM OF DOGMATICS

BY

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FAITH IN GOD THE FATHER (*CONTINUED*)

Following the principle of division which we laid down at the beginning of our Dogmatics proper (p. 319 f.), we now come to our section upon

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Here we follow up what we said regarding the nature of God, after having defined it more fully, as in the nature of the case we have to do, in the light of God's relation to the world and especially the sinful world. We deal first of all with the fundamental questions of method: What are attributes? What is the significance of speaking of the attributes of God? How are they to be classified?

The Fundamental Questions of Method

The *concept* "attributes" may be elucidated by a simple explanation. We know the nature of a thing from its effects; for what produces no effect whatever upon us does not exist so far as we are concerned, being unknowable by us. This is indisputable because self-evident, if we leave the matter in this general form. If we proceed to state it more precisely, the hardest problems of epistemology are of course involved; but these

do not fall to be considered here, for the purpose we are concerned with. Accepting that self-evident statement we may add : A thing's regular modes of producing effects we call its attributes. But then again it is evident that we know the nature of a thing if we know its attributes. This is so for the reason already given, that we know it only so far as it produces some sort of effect on us.

What we are saying gives us at the same time the *significance* of the doctrine of the Divine attributes. They give expression to what the character of God really is. This is shown for example by the gratitude and joy with which they are extolled by the pious in Israel : they are never done referring to the Divine mercy and grace, patience, great goodness and faithfulness (Exod. xxxiv. 6 ff., with parallels). It is just the nature of their God that they are here extolling. It certainly sounds very well, when throughout the whole history of Dogmatics we hear the assertion made in reply to what we are saying, that God "properly speaking" has no attributes : His nature is so pure and simple that no single attribute can be predicated of Him ; the attributes do not indicate something special in God, but in the mode in which we refer to Him our feeling of absolute dependence (Schleiermacher). As that statement, "God has no attributes," was originally meant, taken strictly it would be equivalent to saying that God is unknowable, which again would mean that He does not exist for us. As a matter of fact, the Neo-Platonic idea of God, according to which God is pure indeterminate being, is of no value to man in his struggle with difficulties without and within. Any value it has is due to the fact that this philosophical abstraction, which in the best case signifies only the world conceived of as a unity and not as a plurality, always brings with it

furtively certain characteristics from actual religion, in which religious trust can find support. But even where this intrusive matter preponderates, the reiteration of the idea that properly speaking God has no attributes is not free from danger. There is the continual danger at least in the background that our Living God and the reality of His effect on the world, His relation to our guilt and our faith, to our need and our happiness, may be volatilized, or that God may be represented in some form which does not get into such close touch with His real nature. Christian Faith can acquiesce in the statement under consideration only as a reminder of important truths. In the first place, the truth that in God all the attributes are the expression of the oneness of His nature, His eternally good will. He does not require, for example, to balance His goodness, Wisdom and Righteousness against each other, as we imperfect human personalities have got to do. In this sense Augustine is correct in his sublime statement that His greatness is identical with His truth, and His truth with His goodness. Again we have no adequate idea of the inner life of Deity in its formal, or if I may use the word, its psychic aspect (pp. 326 ff.).

It is quite essential to this Christian view of the significance of the Divine attributes, that we should here as elsewhere keep before our minds our supreme principle, that we derive our knowledge of our God from revelation—from the face of Jesus Christ. We do not require to adopt the much-discussed Neo-Platonic method of "the three ways". According to the first, from all the effects in the world we ascend to the Cause. The second seeks to construe all that is imperfect as perfect. The third seeks to abstract from the perfection thus reached, however absolute, all the definiteness which still adheres to and limits it, on the principle that all

determination is limitation. In this way we could attain only to a shadowy and unsubstantial conception of God, as that pure being without distinctive character of which we have spoken.

What we have already said also includes all that is of importance on the subject of the *classification* of the attributes. We cannot divide them into quiescent and active, for if we understand the matter rightly there are no quiescent attributes, seeing that all attributes are modes of activity, and can be known only from the effects they produce. For the same reason the kindred division into attributes of the Divine transcendence and attributes of the Divine immanence is a dangerous one, in so far as it means more than the obvious statement that God is not the world. On the other hand, if God is Holy Love as was previously shown, all His attributes must be the modes of the activity of this love, which serve to analyze the unity exhibited by the inexhaustible riches of its content. We have only to add this one thing, which also is a consequence of what has gone before, that because the Divine Love presupposes the idea of Absolute Personality (pp. 321 ff.), we shall have to distinguish between attributes of Love and those of Absolute Personality. In this respect also the doctrine of the Divine Attributes corresponds exactly to the doctrine of God. Nor can there be any question what these latter attributes are : Omnipresence and Eternity differentiate the Divine Love from the world given us in space and time which God loves, so that these attributes correspond to the idea of the absolute in the doctrine of God. But Omnipotence and Omniscience have reference to the fundamental characteristics of life as found in spiritual personalities—will and intellect—and correspond to the idea of Absolute Personality in the doctrine of God.

Detailed Exposition

Attributes of the Love of God

Among these it is really only the attribute of wisdom which demands a special place, and not that of goodness as well, and at all events both have to be exhibited in all the divine activity, and not merely in the sphere of nature and of general morality; otherwise their distinctively Christian character is readily lost. Universal in scope and ANTECEDENT TO LOVE, where there can be no question as yet of love in the strict sense, and where love is not reciprocated, we have *goodness* (= beneficence) and *kindness*, readiness to bestow life and joy. Their compass accordingly is in no way confined to the Kingdom of God. God is good to His whole creation (Ps. XXXIII. 5) and "wishes well to many who thank Him not". But even when love is already actively in evidence, goodness continues to act as its friendly ally, just as at an earlier stage it effectively paved the way for love. Thinking of Jesus, according to ancient testimony, His contemporaries said, "Let us try kindness". The value of even our imperfect goodness in the way of producing and maintaining genuine loving fellowship, should help us to understand the significance of the goodness of God, which is the source and archetype of ours. This applies especially to the circumstance that strict righteousness is an element of the Divine goodness as well as of the Divine love, and preserves our human copy from weak indulgence which would injure it. God's goodness is always the forecourt, whereas His love is the sanctuary. But before we proceed to consider this point, we note that special words are used to indicate both goodness and love *in their relation to time.*

Patience and long-suffering point not merely to the

suspension of punishment, but to the love which never tires till it has exhausted its last resource. Owing to the contrast between the apparent impotence of long-suffering, and supreme moral omnipotence, this is an attribute which excites special reverence. Thus Luther, for example, never wearies of pointing to the fact that God does not "force His will" upon us in human fashion as the proof of His deity. Related to long-suffering we have *faithfulness*. But in Scripture this is used very specially in reference to those who already have faith, drawing attention to the faithfulness of God as triumphing victoriously over the distress caused them by their weakness; that "God is faithful" remains even under these circumstances the "supreme treasure" of their lives. *Truth* is used partly in a special sense for God's faithfulness to His promises, partly, especially in John, with a quite general reference, arising out of, though passing beyond the Greek usage, to indicate the supreme value as the supreme reality, so that in this deepest sense of the term "Love" and "Truth" are directly interchangeable, just as on the other hand "evil" and "lie" are.

The fundamental attributes of love, considered in its inmost nature, first of all *in its self-sacrificing aspect*, are Grace and Mercy. *Grace* (the cardinal word of Paulinism) is love in its free and sovereign condescension especially to the unworthy—to sinners who guiltily resist it. That such love is really the character of God and not simply a supernatural power which proceeds from God, may be explicitly emphasized as a truth which came to life anew in the experience of our Reformers. But because we Protestants often use the word thoughtlessly, it is sometimes advisable for purposes of practical religion to use other words like "favour" instead. Closely related to grace is *mercy*, but it denotes love as interesting itself in human misery,

and emphasizes at the same time its character as alive, pointing to the ardour and anguish "of the Divine heart," if the words can be permitted (Jer. xxxi. 20).

In discussing all these separate aspects of the activity of the Divine love, an activity which constitutes a unity, we must not forget that we had to define THE LOVE OF GOD as HOLY (pp. 343 ff.). Having this in view Holy Scripture speaks of *the wrath of God.* In the numerous and sometimes impassioned discussions of this phrase, it has not always been clearly realized that two important ideas are involved. The one is the idea of holy love which we have just mentioned, the love of God which must not be trifled with, the love which just by reason of its uniqueness has an element of unique sternness bound up with it. This is an idea which we have been emphasizing from the start: nothing further need be said about it here. The other is that of a living movement in the inner life of deity; and because when we men speak of wrath what we think of is the passion, the explosiveness and at the same time the transitoriness of the mood in question, from a very early date the ascription of wrath to God has occasioned difficulties and led to modifications of the meaning of the word. The most celebrated of these is as follows; The wrath of God in the New Testament means simply the final reaction of God against those who to the end resist His love, His annihilation of them; that is, it simply points to a quite definite activity on the part of God at the close of history. Such a view, it is said, excludes everything anthropopathic, and there can be no question of wrath as an attribute of God. The New Testament proof for this view (which is that of Ritschl), a view that suits some passages admirably, cannot be extended to others without forced exegesis (in Rom. i. 18 and John iii. 36, the present is referred to). But

the intention to exclude everything anthropopathic can neither be justified on Biblical grounds, since Paul for example, alongside of wrath uses the term indignation, which in its way is still stronger, nor is it in any point of view desirable. For if the reaction against human sin is to be regarded as simply an effect produced by God without meaning anything for the life of God Himself, the same must be said of His love; which manifestly would be an infringement of the fundamental presupposition of Christianity. Accordingly we must give another decision of the question. We are again face to face with the mystery of the Divine personality, of which we are compelled to think as life capable of being moved to its inmost depths, without however being able to press this necessary idea to its logical conclusions. This is a subject upon which we shall soon have to say our final word, when dealing with the doctrine of the eternity of God. On the other hand, if those who approve of the expression "Divine wrath" had remembered that our Christian knowledge is subject to such limitation, they could not have spoken of it in terms which endanger not only the inner unity of the Divine life, but even the Christian conception of love, and are capable of being confirmed rather by separate statements of the Old Testament, and these far from the highest ones, than by the essential message of the New. To put the matter briefly: the strictness and holiness of the Divine love must be maintained unimpaired. But the expression "wrath of God" can be employed only with the reverent reserve which we owe to the mystery of the Divine life; and it is only in a very metaphorical sense that wrath can be designated as an attribute of God.

There can be no question, however, that we still require to speak of the RIGHTEOUSNESS of God as a speci-

ally important attribute. Its specific character consists in its summing up in a single word the various modes of the activity of the love of God, both those which forgive and heal sin, and those which condemn and destroy it. That would certainly not be the case if our old Divines were correct in their idea of righteousness as a purely and distinctively juristic conception. They distinguish between legislative or antecedent and executive or consequent righteousness, subdividing the latter again into remunerative and punitive. As a matter of fact, however, because of sin it was only the punitive that called for consideration. How much they were in earnest in this is shown by their doctrine of the atonement, the whole purpose of which was to prove the compatibility of the righteousness and the mercy of God, according to the standards of this righteousness regarded as punitive. This conception of righteousness is still widely prevalent, even where the rigour of the old doctrine has long since been modified. It scarcely needs to be proved that it is not the biblical view, or more accurately by no means the whole biblical view. Especially in the Psalms and in Isaiah, we very frequently find grace in one couplet and righteousness in the other placed side by side, and that too where the context precludes the idea of their being contrasted (Ps. CIII. 17, CXLIII. 1, 2, with parallel passages). Indeed it is very easy to understand how under the influence of such passages, and in antithesis to such narrowing of the word to punitive righteousness, the attempt was made to deny that the concept has any reference to rewards and punishments, and to exclude the activity of God as Judge altogether. It was held now that in Scripture righteousness denotes simply the consistency of the activity of God in the realization of His saving purpose, and is scarcely distinguishable from grace with which formerly it was contrasted in the

sharpest possible manner (Ritschl). This transformation of the concept, indeed, looked, if we may say so, like a late recognition of the Pauline idea of justification in the sphere of biblical philology as well as elsewhere; for as a matter of fact, between the old conception of punitive righteousness and the usage of the Epistle to the Romans, there was a gulf fixed, which necessarily became increasingly clear, when once the old doctrine of substitutionary punishment was no longer held in its full rigour. Only now on the other hand too little regard was paid to all those expressions of Holy Scripture which undeniably refer to punitive righteousness (cf. e.g. 2 Thess. i. 6 ff.); and putting the matter generally who could deny that the idea of God's judicial government is a fundamental one for both Old and New Testaments, and cannot be transformed without violence into the general idea of a relation operating consistently according to an inner law of its own?

Dogmatics cannot discuss in detail all the difficult questions which concern the biblical idea of righteousness—questions moreover about the answers to which there are great differences of opinion. It must content itself with a brief statement of results. "The Holy God sanctifies Himself through righteousness" (Is. v. 16). He is alone, and beside Him there is no other. He is exalted not only above all that is transitory, but in a moral point of view above all that is evil. He alone is perfect. Being all this, He sanctifies His people to Himself, claims them for His own that they may be like Him, chooses them, calls and guides them. As their King, as Lawgiver, Judge and Ruler in inseparable unity, He determines what is right for His people, what is in accordance with His supreme purpose, and applies this standard set by Himself in living intercourse with them as Lord, in this way manifesting

Himself as the Righteous One. Because His Lordship is dominated by the supreme purpose of which we have spoken, we have His righteousness likewise when He punishes His unrighteous people, justifies them before their foes when they repent, delivers them and perfects them in communion with Himself. In the New Covenant God's Holy Love embraces all men, realizing itself in righteousness in inward conformity with the standards set by itself. In relation to universal human sin it appears as absolving and pardoning. Its supreme manifestation is the revelation of grace in the Cross of Christ. But this grace is such that it conclusively negatives every thought of God as making light of human sin, including as it does His condemnation of sin. In this thought all the explanations of the celebrated passage in Romans III. 21 ff. agree in the last resort, however differently they may interpret the words in detail. Those who in trust accept this revelation of the righteousness of God—of His Love which, however, never ceases to be Holy Love—are righteous in the judgment of God. But the necessary reverse side of this pardoning righteousness is the condemnation of those who resist this "rule of faith," for whom this same righteousness of God necessarily becomes punitive righteousness. Consequently if we wish a brief statement of what the righteousness of God is, it is the practical application of His Holy Love, regarded from the point of view of the sovereign power which He exercises as Judge, according to the standards appointed by Himself and corresponding to His purpose of salvation.

In all the attributes of the love of God which we have dealt with hitherto, a specially important part is played by WISDOM, which therefore deserves a place of its own. We call the divine love "wise," because it

accomplishes the supreme purpose by the use of absolutely the best means, showing in this respect absolute intelligence. In the later portions of the Old Testament, it is preferably those aspects of nature and human life which are not directly religious that are discussed as the sphere where this wisdom manifests itself (Wisdom at the gate). But the more the assurance was given that all things are purposeful and show intelligence, the more scepticism as to a certain, supreme purpose increased ("all is vanity"), and it was only the simple fear of God that prevented the pessimism of despair. The New Testament on the other hand shows how the wisdom of God celebrates its triumph in the fact that it makes what is most contrary to the divine purpose, namely human sin, by the use of the means which seems most out of keeping with it, namely the death of Christ, serve the supreme purpose, finding the most enigmatic solution for the greatest riddle of the universe (1 Cor. I. 2). From this point faith sees light diffused over all the dark places of history and of the individual life, in its assurance that the ways of God are the best ways to the best goal, though these ways, and so too the particular purposes comprised in the supreme purpose, may continue for the present to be to a great extent enigmatic in their details (Rom. VIII. 28, 31 ff.; cf. XI. 33 ff.). The Doctrine of Providence supplies us in a very characteristic manner with a fuller treatment of this attribute of God.

Attributes of Absolute Personality

Detailed Exposition

The attributes of the Holy Love of God which we have dealt with would be religiously valueless, if they could not be believed in and experienced as modes of the activity

of a Divine love which is omnipotent and omniscient, omnipresent and eternal. For what good would it do us to have a love that is kind, righteous and wise, which in the actual world, though possessed of greater power than ours, was yet not all-powerful, and thus capable of making all things work for the best to us? Which, though a comfort to us yet needed to be comforted itself, because its pure will lacked the power of achievement? As these attributes constitute the fundamental qualities of Absolute Personality, we naturally encounter the same difficulties here as engaged our attention when dealing with that subject. These difficulties come before us in a still more serious form now, because we are not concerned simply with the inner life of the Godhead as such, but with the relation of God to a world which, notwithstanding all its dependence, is yet by God's own will possessed of a certain independence. Accordingly the statements which follow are exactly in line with what we said both regarding the Personality of God and regarding the world as God's, and find their further application in the doctrine of Providence.

If here without more ado we construe omnipotence as omnipotent will, this requires no justification in relation to Dogmatics. In it we are really concerned not with the Absolute generally, but with Absolute Personality. But perhaps it is worth while to draw attention to the fact that language has not coined a special word for the emotional life of God, as it has done for His will and intellect; although not only the idea of the wrath of God, but the designation of the nature of God as Love points directly to that life, and it is in relation to His love that the great problem we have spoken of above is most urgent.

The Love of God revealed in Christ manifests itself to faith as ALL-POWERFUL, in that the Divine will to love

employs without any limitation all means for the realization of the supreme purpose. So absolutely is this the case that the whole world in its present condition will be dissolved and transformed as soon as this purpose of love of which we speak demands it—we have "a new heaven and a new earth". But this doctrinal statement of the Almighty Love of God stands in need of further definition. The sentence that "with God nothing is impossible" or that "God can do what He wills," contains two propositions. It means first: "All that is real is real because God wills it," and second: "All that God wills is real". The former affirms that the Divine Will is subject to no limitation outside of itself; there is nothing real the reality of which is not grounded upon the will of God, not even what are called eternal truths. The other affirms that God could not have created anything and everything other than what is real. His unconditioned will, that is, is not caprice; even the truths of mathematics, e.g. have their basis in God's distinctively rational will. In the History of Dogma, the Thomists were disposed to alter the former statement, and the Scotists the latter. Only *both taken together* contain the full truth. Schleiermacher was undoubtedly correct in saying that there is nothing real but has its cause in God, and all is real that has a cause in God. It is not against these two statements that objections ought to have been directed, but against the further *explanation* which Schleiermacher has given them, as if it were the only possible one; namely that all that is real is realized by God in essentially the same way, and that all that God wills is willed by Him in essentially the same sense. That would certainly mean, as it does with Schleiermacher (Der Christliche Glaube, §§ 46-49), that what is called free and what is spoken of as being by necessity of nature, the evil and the good,

what we call miraculous and the occurrences which we speak of as being in accordance with natural law, are alike absolutely grounded in the omnipotent will of God. To guard against this construction of the Divine omnipotence, our old Dogmatic theologians formulated the conceptions which are certainly inadequate of the antecedent and the consequent, the unconditioned and the conditioned will of God, meaning by "conditioned" taking account of the will of man. In this way they thought that room was found for free actions. But are we then thinking really of the Divine omnipotence? I refer not only to this formula of our old theologians, but to the general case, when we define the double statement referred to in the manner indicated. This is a problem which comes before us in our discussion of each of the attributes which follow, most clearly in that of eternity; it is there, accordingly, that we shall deal with it in detail.

Regarding OMNISCIENCE we reach precisely similar conclusions and in the end are confronted by the same problem. The Absolute Will is the Absolute Intelligence. God knows all things; that is, all things are known to God as they are, and all things are as they are because they are so known to God. But again this does not mean that such knowledge must be one and the same in regard to all that is known, good and evil, nature and freedom. When our old theologians spoke of a "mediate" knowledge, therefore, they indicated that at this point there exists the same sort of limit to our knowledge to which the idea of omnipotence brought us.

The religious interest in the OMNIPRESENCE of God is likewise not difficult to understand. "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts XVII. 28); "Am I not a God at hand, and am I not a God afar off" (Jer. XXIII. 23)? To His omnipotent and omniscient love, the

space in which we move and which constitutes one of the fundamental Forms of finite existence must present no obstacle, if we are to have in all places equally the comfort of His near presence and help. Yet at the same time space must not be taken to mean nothing at all for God, otherwise the reality of our existence in space appears to be threatened. Every instance of anxiety about those we love, when they are at a distance from us, shows how indispensable are both aspects of the one faith, that God is equally near to them and to us, and that separation in space is no mere phantom. In such experience faith assigns additional special importance to the thought, that the love of God will reveal itself in ways transcending all our comprehension in a new world, which need no longer be a world of space like our present one. But it does not require any lengthy argument to show once again how limited our knowledge is, how imperfect, e.g. are the traditional conceptions which aim at defining the Divine omnipresence. It is said to be not simply a presence of effect, that is one that acts from without, as the architect, let us say, is present in his building, but an actual presence of being—not only "operative," but "essential". We are told, however, that it is not to be conceived of in the way in which an earthly body fills space,—not as "circumscriptive"—nor yet in that in which a force is present when it acts upon the proper elements at different points of space,—not as "diffinitive"—but in a special "Divine way". Scholasticism exhausted its most hair-splitting subtlety upon such questions. But they are not in themselves artificial creations of fancy: they force themselves upon us. They were frequently the first awkward steps taken by philosophy, though it was only on the basis of a quite different theory of knowledge that they could proceed

in any clear direction: we may think, e.g. of the most recent investigations of the idea of action at a distance. Everywhere, however, and that not without reason, they were associated with religious interests.

Still it is only in the doctrine of the ETERNITY of God that the problem emerges in all its difficulty. On the one hand, the religious statements of Holy Scripture celebrate in vivid and varied fashion God's superiority to time. Our little human standard does not apply to Him. In His sight a thousand years are as one day (Ps. XC. 4). To Him honour is due "from everlasting to everlasting" (Rom. I. 25 and parallels), however our human powers of imagination may in despair pile æons upon æons. Accordingly He is called in still stronger terms "the first and the last" (Is. XLIV. 6); He stands so to speak at the beginning and the end of time, and includes it. Or: He is and was and is to come (Rev. I. 8); in present, past and future He is the same. Thus the simplest expression which dispenses with explanation, in any case inadequate, is at the same time in the last resort the most sublime: Thou remainest as Thou art (Psalm CII. 27.) Because God remains in Himself the same without change, He is exalted from the changes of time. On the other hand, everywhere in Scripture, there is presupposed without any difficulty an actual relation of God to time. This is so, not only in expressions which could easily be set aside as anthropomorphisms, but also when it is upon this thought, expressed in images drawn from human life, that the chief emphasis lies. We have, for example, the parables of the unjust judge and the widow, or of the friend asking a favour, and the prodigal son (Luke XVIII. 1 ff., XI. 5 ff., XV. 11 ff.). "He would not for a while," doubtless means that persistent prayer, that is in our connexion the distinction of time, the waiting, the expectancy, and the importunity of the

petitioner, means something for God. In the same way it is not a matter of indifference to Him whether the son wanders forlorn in the strange country, or He sees him coming afar off.

The meaning of this double series of affirmations is clear. For us temporally conditioned struggling men, the love of God can be the object of unqualified trust, only if it is not temporally conditioned as we are, but rising superior to time dominates it as a means—namely time which pulls us along, often like slaves in chains, in conflict, anxiety and uncertainty, alternating between fear and hope. Unless we are certain that neither present nor future (Rom. VIII. 31 ff.) can separate us from the love of God, we are lost. But it is equally certain that if time were nothing for God, and all its changes existed only in our finite human consciousness, once more God's love could not be our absolute resting-place; for that for which we thought that we required and found a resting-place, our life in time, would be merely an illusion.

This twofold truth comes most clearly to light and is of most importance in the inmost sanctuary of the religious life. Is it only for our imperfect observation that there is an opposition between our faith and our want of faith, our being laid hold of by the love of God and our sinful struggling against that love? And again between God's love and His holy withdrawing of Himself from us, the sight of His grace and His hiding of His face? By no means. But we can no more help asking, on the other hand, whether this is not to involve God in the changefulness of time and to make Him finite. And yet the very life of our religion is that God rules over our want of faith and our faith in eternal love. The same difficulty troubles us, only more in the province of theological reflection, when we ask: How are

God's omnipotence and omniscience related to time? In particular, if He knows free actions from all eternity, are they really free? And if not, is He really omniscient? Finally, on the very threshold of metaphysical speculation we have the question: How are we to conceive of the ordering of the world by God in reference to time, without making God finite or deifying the world? We are always, though in different forms and with varying degrees of urgency, coming up against this same problem of time in relation to the Eternity of God.

The Problem

Three leading attempts at a solution are known to the history of Christian thought. *The first* conceives of the eternity of God as a denial of time, or as the timeless cause of time; i.e. the former of the two fundamental interests of religion which we set forth above, has effect given to it without further consideration. We thus get an idea which is definite enough, looked at by itself. But of course the second fundamental interest which was spoken of suffers: the real relation of God to the world of time is only a matter of our subjective thought. God's love and anger, our faith and our sin, are illusions. His Omnipotence and Omniscience extend to every occurrence, as all happens of necessity. The world, like God, is eternal.

The second attempt at a solution proceeds exactly in the opposite way. It seeks to arrive at the unity of thought from the other side. To it, eternity is existence without beginning and without end. But as surely as the real relation of God to time is emphatically asserted in that case, the other requirement which is equally indispensable, viz. God's exaltation above all movement in time, is not satisfied. Accordingly, as regards the de-

tails of the great question which were alluded to, the love of God above all, as we find it on this supposition, is not eternal in very truth: God is a great and good man, but not God. Then too His Omnipotence and Omniscience are limited by human freedom; and however ready one may be to relieve such doubts by speaking of "God's voluntary limitation of Himself in love," yet all religious feeling which is not over-refined is seriously opposed to that view (cf. Ps. CXXXIX. 16; Eph. I. 4). Finally, the proposition that God created the world in time, is a manifest denial of the conception of the unchanging nature of God.

But then is it really the case that the two fundamental ideas—God's exaltation above time and His intervention in time—are so irreconcilable for our thought, that only by altering one or other can unity be reached, as in the attempts just mentioned? The former of these naturally enough commended itself to those of the theologians who were philosophers, such as Dionysius the Areopagite, Aquinas, Schleiermacher. The other, which is more akin to the popular consciousness, is represented in theology by the Socinians. Ought there not to be *a clear solution* which, without doing violence to either side, expresses the whole truth without contradiction? The answer might then be as follows. What in reality exists must be regarded as being above all movement in time, yet in such a way that in its essential being there occurs a succession of moments. That this may not at once prove to be merely playing with words, a course of procedure which only conceals the contradiction, it is added that what we describe as occurring in time is the temporal manifestation in their order of the conditions which are essential to what is real. For it is only by the content and by the chain of conditions in the case of anything that occurs, that the fact of the occurrence is

determined, and not by the stream of time. To us now, who are the individual members of this composite structure, what is actual appears in the form of time, and what is of the present appears as actual. For God, however, the ground of this illusion falls away. To every member of the existing whole He is equally near, and He sees all in the timeless form of the underlying chain of conditions that was referred to. In that form our faith and our unbelief are something real for God; and yet God is not brought into time. There too is the sphere of free actions, not as non-existent and future, but as existent: God does not foresee them as what will be, but observes them as something real which, appearing in time, finds its place at a definite point in the "future". And the old saying that God created the "world with time" appears then as an obvious truth, not as the mere evasion of a difficulty. Such attempts, exemplified, we may say, with the greatest distinction of thought by Lotze, will always enlist our personal sympathy. The thinking mind feels itself always impelled afresh to ven ture on a bold flight of the kind. It is a vain flight, however. The pronouncement which was made,—"God is exalted above all movement in time," and yet "in His essential Being there is a succession of moments,"—is no solution. At once it brings us back to the alternative which one replaces at will with an assertion of identity. What else is the succession of moments except the movement in time that one wants to deny? The idea itself which is supposed to contain the solution shares the same fate. What was described as the order of those conditions which are essential to what is real, an order which is for God eternally present, because He is not, as we are, an element of that reality, Himself conditioned by all the other elements, but is in equally close relation to all as the comprehensive condition, as the

ground of the whole,—the order of the conditions, I say, is not identical with that reality as determined in time which we resolved into the order in question, so that we might escape from the difficulties which arise when we employ the conception of time in relation to God. Hence we can no longer speak of the complete reality of the world as distinguished from God, taking the word reality in the simple sense of our immediate experience. We have insensibly glided over to the first-mentioned attempt at a solution. What else, e.g. is that "observation of free actions at a definite point of reality" but a denial of freedom?

But this conclusion with regard to the third attempt at a solution opens up the way for the adoption of an entirely DIFFERENT ATTITUDE towards our problem. We have not another new solution to offer. On the contrary we deliberately disclaim the idea of a solution. For the problem with which we are so vainly occupied is no other than that of our finite existence itself; this presents itself to our consciousness most directly only in regard to the question of time. We cannot solve this question, because we cannot abstract from time, without denying the fundamental presupposition of our finite existence. At a certain stage of the mental development of humanity and of the individual, the problem together with the insolubility of it inevitably emerges, and always in some new shape. And the more profoundly we investigate the matter, the more profoundly are we impressed by the saying of Augustine—I know what time is, if no one asks me; if I wish to explain it to an inquirer, I know not what it is. The old statement, "I am in time, and time is in me," only becomes increasingly wonderful for every new observer of man's personality in its relation to time. It is therefore an entirely baseless sneer at the Christian faith that it can

give no answer to the question of the relation of God to time. Faith merely realizes this question in a more earnest personal way, because it is inseparably connected with its loftiest and most deeply cherished possession. Indeed it occupies a more favourable standpoint than all the opponents who charge it with ignorance. It does not accept this limit to its knowledge as if making a virtue of necessity, but honours it as being necessary and self-evident in the light of that conception of Divine Revelation which faith adopts. Thus too there is no longer any attraction for it in trying to evade the fact by pretended and illusive arts, and "in placing one's self at God's point of view". Faith on its part is assured of its being placed at God's point of view, in the sense in which this expression has any meaning, raised to it, as faith is, by God's condescending love. But to cancel the difference between God and the world appears to it not only an irreligious but also a senseless proceeding. In that case, God would not be God, and the way to God would be opened up for the knowledge which implies coercion, and not where there is a personal decision (p. 148 ff.).

For this reason the Christian Church secures a further gain, one which is of far-reaching significance, for the intellectual apprehension of her faith, as she makes a thorough investigation of this idea of the Eternity of God. She learns that here we have not one mystery EXISTING SIDE BY SIDE WITH MANY OTHERS. Not without reason has Dogmatics been brought into disrepute by the superfluity of its mysteries, whereas the Gospel tells in reality of the Revelation of the mystery of God. The truth that this revealed mystery includes a side which is still hidden, so far as our knowledge is concerned, turned away from the sun so to say; the truth that in this regard faith still waits to become sight hereafter,

but will be so changed without fail,—this truth is likewise one which is peculiar to the Gospel from the first, and is certainly not one which was excogitated on account of a difficulty. It is a truth which follows from the nature of the revealed mystery,—God and Man; eternal Fatherly love, and God's children growing up in time. But this enigma which continues yet for thought stands forth as a unity; it is no other than that which we are speaking of, the Eternity of God. Wherever the Revelation of God's love presents us with an enigma in Dogmatics, whether in the Doctrine of the World, of Providence, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, we must endeavour to trace it back to this single one, the necessity and present insolubility of which we do understand. We glanced at it in its greatest darkness and depth, when dealing with the question of the origin of sin. But there the darkness was illuminated at the same time in the clearest manner, in so far as it is a question in the last resort, not of the mystery of our finite existence generally, but of that of our moral and religious existence in the full Christian sense. A deeper insight into this enigma the Christian is encouraged to hope for, by experiencing the fact that for the children of God, objects of the heavenly Father's love, time, once felt as a burdensome fatality, begins to be a means which serves their purpose. This superiority to time which they begin to feel leads to a yearning on their part for a new and higher world, in which "time" as we know it will be no more, but where there will nevertheless be the eternal movement of life which is life indeed. And in proportion as this experience becomes theirs, in adoring God they will know His Eternity (1 John III. 1 ff.). Yet the difference between Creator and creature is not brought to an end even then. Their blessedness consists in the love of God, who is blessed in His love.

Compare the doctrine of the love of God, and the sections which are still before us.

At the point we have now reached, much that was said above regarding the limits of our knowledge will be plainer. In treating this great subject, Dogmatics must really be contented with assumptions, which, unless there is a precise explanation, always include an element that fails to satisfy. In particular, it is difficult to get over the seeming fact that the power of human knowledge is held to be limited in the interest of faith. Hence we were always so cautious in declining to place any great confidence in epistemology. Here now where the reason, and it is in the last resort the only one, that faith has for settling the question of its relation to knowledge, comes before us with the clearness of a concrete instance, the advances we make to meet any serious endeavour which sets itself against an overhasty limitation of knowledge, may be in a special degree free from all reserve. This applies particularly to those investigations we spoke of in regard to the "religious a priori," from which a possible danger to religion had to be pointed out by us; while we also remarked on their want of clearness in many cases, from the point of view of science (pp. 131 ff., 171 f., 194 ff., 260 f.). Yet if there is deeper research in the prosecution of them, faith and knowledge may hope for excellent fruits. It would be a fatal error to reject such investigations in advance, by adducing some formula of epistemology, however serviceable it may be for the time to which it belongs. Nothing is farther from the mind of the writer on Dogmatics who knows his work, than even in appearance to endanger the unity of our mental life. Scarcely anything can be so welcome to him as what makes that unity plain. Only he must insist that it is not asserted at the cost of our assurance as to the peculiar nature

of the most important aspects of our mental life; a course which always inflicts harm on faith and knowledge alike. If this is presupposed, he will further be able to rejoice at all the attempts made in any quarter, to bring that one great mystery of time and eternity vividly, however imperfectly, before our thought. Thus we have the "stammering" of an Augustine, in the hour which he speaks of as that in which he parted from his mother; the hymn of a Carlyle to the Ideality of Space and Time in *Sartor Resartus;* the bold speculation of a Lotze regarding the Eternity of God in relation to time. But here too, and here most of all, we recollect the "symbolical" character of all human speech, which yet does not prevent it from describing the highest reality that we are privileged to experience. Then all this taken in combination is calculated to make faith realize its full glory: every moment of time, the present which is never to be held fast, the past with its joy and its sorrow, the darkness of the future,—all is embraced by the love of God which is eternally present and omnipotent, an eternal Now of blessed activity, although as yet, for struggling faith, it is wrapped in the veil of time.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

The doctrines which have been dealt with in the preceding pages, those relating to God, to God's World, to the Attributes of God, are comprised, so far as our personal Christianity is concerned with them, in the Doctrine of Divine Providence; and to this last a direct transition was formed by our last statements regarding Eternity. That would be still more obvious if the word Providence (*Vorsehung*) did not readily mislead us into thinking, first and chiefly, of the mystery of God's Eternity which

has just been dealt with. Originally it does not lay the emphasis on the foreseeing, but on providing (*Fürsehen*: we continue to say yet, "The Lord will provide"—*versehen*); and its root-idea is that God cares for us, does not simply possess knowledge regarding us, but, as the All-wise and loving One, has a certain purpose with us. Thus the vital aspects of the subject immediately come to light. What does this Providential care of God seek to effect? With what means does it accomplish its aim? In other words, here as elsewhere we must ask as to the Wherefore and the How. Then it is clear as a matter of course why we were able to say that *faith in Providence*, rightly understood, is *religion* itself.

It is not with regard to Christianity alone that this holds good. The denial of Providence is the denial of all religion. Its pure and absolute opposite is the belief in Chance, when all meaning and purpose in our life and in the world are denied, because God is denied; but Fatalism, too, the denial of all living converse between us and the supramundane Power, endangers the perfect concept of religion: "fatalistic" Islam is not absolute fatalism. But as surely as all real religion is in some sense faith in Providence, this faith is nevertheless as varied as the religions concerned are themselves varied,—as among the Indians, among the Greeks, in Israel, in Christianity. The difference is due in the last resort to the fact that the belief in God is diverse; and according to the conviction of the faithful, this belief itself depends on the manner in which God has revealed Himself. Hence it is quite correctly said that the counsel, "Commit thy way unto the Lord," understood in the full Christian sense, constitutes the whole of Christianity. To trust as a child of God in the Providence of the heavenly Father, is possible only for the

Christian, who knows in Christ the gracious God and Father; and only such an one understands just in the "Christian" sense, the purpose and the nature of the Providence of this God. He understands its purpose, for he knows what is meant by sonship to God in God's eternal kingdom. And he understands its nature, for he knows what is signified when it is said that everything is a means for this supreme purpose, and when it is stated how the means act. But of course one may not conceive the counsel, "Commit thy way unto the Lord," and therefore the faith in Providence, in the specifically Christian sense, one may fail to make the goal sufficiently high and broad, regarding it for example in quite too material a fashion or in a manner which is quite too individualistic; or one's view of the paths leading to the goal may not be sufficiently true to life, or the ground of such trust may not be sufficiently deep. In that case it is evident that the faith in Providence is not Christian piety in the full sense.

Hence too the *History* of Christian faith as applying to Providence is instructive; it shows in relation to the most diverse aspects of the matter what we require to attend to. Our theologians of the past did not emphasize the *ground* of this faith with the distinctness of purpose which the Reformers' conception of salvation demanded, overlooking that indissoluble connexion which exists in Romans VIII. between the 28th verse and the 32nd. The best hymns know the connexion well. The one beginning—"*Ist Gott für mich, so trete gleich alles wider mich*" ("If God is for me, let all else be against me"), states it expressly when it says: "*Der Grund, darauf ich gründe, ist Christus*" ("The ground on which I build is Christ"). The theologians, however, maintain that Providence is recognized even by the light of nature; and likewise in the hymns, faith in Providence gradually

became to a great extent independent of faith in the Atonement, as the relation between Gellert and Gerhardt shows. On the other hand, the *purpose* of Divine Providence was in the main correctly defined by orthodox Dogmatics; properly speaking, that was the meaning of the distinction between general, special, and most particular Providence. Especially, however, is the theology referred to entitled to the merit of having conceived the method of Providence, the *form* it takes, with more precision than most of the moderns do. At least, by distinguishing ordinary and extraordinary Providence, it plainly indicated a problem which one does not solve by disregarding it, viz. the relation between Providence and natural causation. So also by means of the ideas of Divine "permission, prevention, guidance, limitation," it marked the problem of human freedom in relation to the Divine guidance of the world; and the numerous examples from Scripture, called into requisition in connexion with the matter, show of themselves that here we have not a question which is arbitrarily raised; though after all a strictly objective series of ideas may be wanting, and if we take the given suppositions, a satisfactory elucidation may be quite impossible. For Rationalism, Providence was the favourite doctrine; it showed excessive delight in the evidences for the goodness and wisdom of God in nature, history, and the life of the individual. But it sacrificed the profoundest element of the traditional doctrine, and in some cases it was precisely the defects in it which were corroborated. Rationalism separated it more completely than ever from the grace of God in Christ, which is its foundation. The doctrine accordingly has not so much reference to the eternal salvation of the children of God in the Divine kingdom, as to the natural well-being of all sentient creatures, the perfect moral improvement of rational beings. And

a theory of external freedom was found in combination with a resolute aversion to miracles. The earthquake at Lisbon was the means of bringing this optimism suddenly to an end. The testimony of Kant as to the powerful impression made on the man of mature age, and of Goethe as to that produced on the mind of the child, is echoed after their time in countless hearts. The speculative idea of an immanent teleology, however, furnished no equivalent for that faith in the care of the living God which had vanished; as Strauss recognized with more clearness than did many of those who took part with him in opposing the belief in Providence. Above all, owing to the influence of modern natural science, the temper of the present day has become so sceptical that, though the circumstances are altered, the situation described by Origen in the third century is renewed, and his assertion is more rigorously proved to to be true, that the dispute about Providence is a dispute about Christianity. In view of this temper, which often utters itself in touching accents of regret at the loss of a blessing which is now irrevocable, and frequently also can only with difficulty suppress the passion of hatred towards God, a justification by the means of Apologetics is indispensable. As we always find, so it is here in particular: success in this undertaking is possible only if the actual content of Christian faith respecting Providence is defined with the greatest possible care, as against misrepresentations of unbelief, as well as against prejudices which are presumably religious. But in so far as that faith in Providence is nothing else except the faith of the Christian that the world is God's world, viewed in concrete instances or as it is immediately realized, we set forth this faith as formerly, first without express reference to sin, and then with reference to it.

Faith in God the Father

Christian Faith respecting Providence, but as yet without Express Reference to Sin

Here we distinguish again between the truths of faith themselves and the problem which is presented by them.

The Truths of Faith

The main points which require to be brought forward have already been mentioned. Regarding the *Purpose* of Providence we may speak briefly; for we have simply to follow out the idea of God which is the clue. God is love, and the supreme purpose of the latter is the Kingdom of love,—the whole being understood in the explicit and definitely Christian sense. Now that being so, the purpose which Divine Providence aims at realizing is this Kingdom of God. In this we are saying nothing new, but repeat what was said on the doctrine of the world as God's World; only we regard the matter from a definite point of view, looking at it simply in a more concrete way, as it appears in our immediate experience. We maintain that the world in which we rejoice and suffer, struggle and hope, is in all respects and at every moment nothing else except the world which belongs to this God who is realizing His will in it. By this faith we live; this faith is our practical Christianity. Let us recall therefore in all its simplicity the matter contained in this proposition—God's providential care aims at realizing the Kingdom of God. Does this aim not apply to our earthly well-being? Nor to the advancement of civilization? Nor to blessings of such high value as the family and the fatherland? No, we reply, but to the Kingdom of God, for the supreme purpose is this Kingdom of God. Yes, we add, without contradicting our-

selves, in so far as all the purposes referred to stand in a definite relation to the Kingdom of God. In other words Providence applies unconditionally to the supreme purpose only, and conditionally to all those other purposes, in so far as they are included in the former. For the Kingdom of God is itself a world of blessings, as inexhaustible in its richness as God Himself is (cf. "Ethics," p. 127 ff.). And here we cannot forget that this inexhaustible store is nowhere regarded so seriously as it is by Christianity (Eph. III. 8; IV. 12 ff.). We with our experience are only standing as yet at the threshold, because our God—and He is the God who is revealed to us in Christ, not an "unknown God"—is always engaged with a new work of creation (Isa. XL. ff.; Rev. XXI. 5; 1 John III. 1 ff.; cf. pp. 236 ff., 348 ff.).

This proposition of ours, that God's Providence applies unconditionally to the highest purpose only, but conditionally to all purposes included in it, is of the utmost significance for our faith, supplies the most powerful lever for "criticism," in the sense of Hebrews IV. 12 ff., throws the light of criticism on "the thoughts and intents of the heart". This applies with reference to claims which fall short of Christianity, as well as with reference to such as are to all appearance peculiarly Christian, going, so to say, beyond Christianity. Many doubts with regard to Divine Providence in the World of to-day spring from the fact, that the fulfilment of those subordinate purposes alluded to is desired from it, as if they were the supreme purpose; compare the numerous productions of modern literature (e.g. the "Letters that Miscarried"). But on the other hand also, Paul was not so "spiritual" but that he prayed for relief from the "thorn in the flesh," though it is certain that he was prepared to take home the truth, "My grace is sufficient for thee". A test of sure

knowledge which is specially plain is found in the attitude assumed towards the pronouncement—"God defends from all evil," in Luther's explanation of the first Article of the Creed, illustrated as it was by the reformer's own life; that pronouncement being itself a reflection of the unique Life, in which faith in the Father's providential care was maintained without defect. What is good, what is best, that to which everything is subservient (Rom. VIII. 28), is the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. VI. 33); but just because of that fact, not in spite of it, what confidence one feels always and everywhere, and in all conceivable positions and occupations, when storms rage, or when one contends with adversaries, is delighted with children, or uses the blessings of earth! The Father's eye takes in everything; His hand guides everything for the Son, and through Him for those who are sons, the children of God.

It hardly calls for special mention that in this answer to the question regarding the purpose of Providence, the question of extent is included, in the sense which is thought of when one asks, What is the OBJECT of this Providence? The immediate object of it can only be the creatures that understand the supreme purpose referred to, and are willing to allow it to be fulfilled in their own case. Here we see the truth of that "most special Providence" of the Dogmatics of a former age, Providence, viz. as applying to the children of God. But according to their relation to the supreme purpose, all members of the Creation are embraced by God's Providence, even the birds of the air and the lilies of the field (Matt. VI.).

This simple and yet inexhaustible statement as to the purpose, and accordingly as to the compass, of Divine Providence would, however, be inexact without

a qualifying admission, although it is one which is necessarily involved in the statement itself. It is that, inasmuch as the statement in question is wholly a pronouncement of faith, it is not exemplified after the manner of a general law of nature which includes all particular cases under it. Rather, amid a great deal of uncertain groping, seeking, wrestling, in personal converse with God, the faith of the individual and of the Church gains an increasing depth of insight into what was described as the unsearchable riches of the Divine decree; and moreover, it obtains for the most part only so much light as is necessary for the steps that have next to be taken. It is only the conceited who know precisely at every moment how the clock stands in the onward movement of the kingdom of God: His real prophets have a struggle to acquire that amount of knowledge which is quite indispensable. They have it afresh moreover at every period: as our heritage is thankfully enjoyed, new tasks are imposed. How are we moderns to apply the knowledge gained by the Reformers as to salvation in this age of machinery, and now that the appreciation of the beautiful has become a powerful factor in our general life? To use the language of our statement—how do we understand those particular purposes in relation to the one supreme purpose of Divine Providence? The task of furnishing a Philosophy of History which would satisfy Christianity, is imposed by Christian faith, as the evidences of the earliest Church themselves show. But the deeper our acquaintance with the task, the deeper too is our insight into the limits marked for the solution of it. Both points are brought home to us in classical fashion in Romans IX.-XI. A peculiarly instructive example of this will always be found when we reflect on the relation of the various main departments of mental life to each other, especi-

ally on the relation of Æsthetics to Ethics and Religion. If this has to be said of history, how much more does it hold good of nature! Here we have to admit not merely that there are gaps in our knowledge, but that there is even an abyss of ignorance. We must not shake the confidence of faith with our tentative efforts at comprehending truth; and yet, taking our stand on the certainty of faith, we do require to extend the horizon of strict religious knowledge, as far as we can.

This line of thought is still more important for us, when we keep in view the NATURE AND METHOD of Providence. In this case too the general truth is not hard to find. It corresponds to what was said about the ground of the world, as the previous assertion corresponded to what was brought out with reference to the purpose of the world; in both cases we have simply the same application in immediate practice of the Christian doctrine of the World. The general truth in question must be stated thus: Providence makes everything whatever the means of fulfilling its supreme purpose and the relative purposes comprised in it. In the New Testament the words which give expression to this faith are among the most impressive. Paul finds he cannot go far enough in massing together things the most diverse that can be conceived, indeed absolutely opposite, for the mere purpose of declaring that all of them alike are simply and solely instruments employed in the Providence of God (Rom. VIII. 28-39; 1 Cor. III. 21-3). There is nothing in heaven or on earth, in the world of natural law or in that of freedom, that is not subservient to the good will of God; indeed it is impossible even that "any other creature," a new Creation, can separate us from the love of God in Christ.

But at this point the Christian becomes aware more quickly and clearly than before, that with regard

to this certainty he moves in the sphere of faith, not of sight. While we already had to point repeatedly to the fact that Romans VIII. 28-39 contains the whole truth only when taken along with Romans XI. 33-6, the perception of this in the present instance, where we are concerned with the Doctrine of Providence, and very specially now when we are considering the means used by Him who cares for us, is a fundamental condition of sound Christian piety. Paul praises and adores the unsearchableness of God's ways, just when he knows that he is privileged to apprehend them in some degree, to show their suitableness for the realization of the Divine purpose of love. He emphasizes this unsearchableness not only because, in the case of all human apprehension whatever, gaps and enigmas stand over for thought, but because even the path which is selected in the light of the goal is always intelligible for us only as *one* way among others to that goal, not as the only conceivable way. Hence faith in Providence, in this aspect of it, as in that which was previously discussed, becomes only gradually one's personal possession; and now just as formerly the great school for it is prayer. In the prayer of thanks and of supplication, every occurrence is treated as a Divine appointment and as illustrative of guidance, being understood and taken home as a means of fulfilling the sovereign purpose, the love of God supplying a gift in it and imposing a task,—that love which makes all things serve for the best. The world becomes the world as prayer regards it. Jesus, when pressed by the crowding details of His special calling, went up to a mountain at night to pray (Mark I. 35 and parallel passages); and He directed His Church to pray in all its situations of perplexity and darkness (Luke XVIII. 1 ff. and parallel passages). Ethics has to show how prayer is the great school both for the upbuilding of one's

personal Christian character, and for gaining an influence over others, or for the true cure of souls, i.e. for the work of creating in them the same strong faith in Providence. For through the practice of prayer, faith in Providence always becomes more deeply and fully conscious of its being wholly a matter for the individual, and is thus preserved both from the profanation of one's private experiences and from all indelicacy and importunity as towards others, and for that very reason from disappointments with regard to those about one, such as are otherwise inevitable, and which in turn shake one's own faith. And yet this reserve is consistent with the fullest confidence.

But we would not speak with sufficient clearness for us who live at present, with regard to the unsearchableness of God's ways and the task thence resulting for faith, if we did not specially consider the peculiar situation in which we of the present day are placed. Let us do so at least by means of an example which guides us naturally to the general position,—the example of the relation between spirit and nature. And let us by no means look merely to catastrophes on a great scale, and to devastating epidemics or to trifling disadvantages inherited in the life of the individual. Often we are distressed by the fact, inscrutable as the Sphinx, that all spiritual life is subject to natural conditions; especially by its slow development in the existence of the community and of the individual—for human impatience inconceivably slow—a development in which æons are multiplied, till at length man appears on the earth, and every person is called on to waste so many of the brief years allotted to him here before arriving at maturity. In addition, there is the danger that results from this entanglement with nature, a danger which, as it seems, is not only renewed with each generation, but increases simultaneously with all

progress in civilization, occurring principally in the sphere of sexual life. And that is inseparable from the extension of our concept of the universe to infinity in space and time, a concept which familiarizes us with astronomical distances and with millions of years. Indeed, though personal faith in the Providence that does all things well may never have been easy, peculiar difficulties in maintaining it are undoubtedly created by this change in our concept of the world ; a change of which it has further been said with good reason, that it is only in the consciousness of the generation now growing up that it comes to be a power that tells in real life ; whereas those of a former period, including the religious classes themselves, gave the matter almost no thought, and allowed the knowledge which of course they possessed with regard to the infinity we are considering, to exercise little influence on their inner feeling.

In view of this whole peculiarity by which it is characterized, faith in Providence, as cherished by the Christian, requires an immovably firm FOUNDATION ; and we can easily understand why, according to the evidence of history, every departure, even the slightest, from this firm ground involved an alteration in the content of that faith, alike as regards the Divine purpose and the mode of fulfilment. If faith in Providence is the recapitulation in practice of Christian faith generally, its foundation can be no other than that which is set forth in Apologetics, and then recalled in connexion with every doctrinal article. This faith does not rest, then, on demonstrative conclusions of our reason, or on postulates of the moral will. And just as little is it built on subjective experiences of Divine providential care as such, in particular events found to be specially impressive. These are doubtless important means used by Providence for leading up to faith in Providence and for confirming it ; but when looked at

by themselves and treated as the principal matter, they do not lead to certainty, and all that was formerly said about subjective experience would have here to be repeated. Here as before we are concerned not with subjective experience as subjective, but with that ground of experience which is at once objective and subjectively apprehended. And it is no other than the reality of the love of God, which overcomes all obstructions, a reality which appears in the history of Divine Revelation culminating in Jesus, in His Cross,—that seeming contradiction of all Providence. The great proof of the love of God in the sending of His Son alone warrants the conclusion of faith—"How shall He not with Him also give us all things?" (Rom. VIII. 32). And for Jesus Himself, it was by no means the Power, Goodness and Wisdom of the Creator, viewed generally, but the communion maintained between the Father and Son, that was the support of His faith, a faith that after all involved Him in conflict of such profound significance for the maintenance of it, that this always creates anew the most serious hindrances for those who would repose trust in Him (cf. e.g. Schrempf, "Menschenlos").

Now as this ground of our faith in Providence which is alone trustworthy can only become the sure resting-place of the individual, if the often-mentioned conditions in the personality are satisfied; and as it always requires to be accepted anew on those terms, i.e. by means of a fight of faith which is ever renewed; the attainment and confirmation of faith in Providence, at all stages of the development of Christian life and of Church history, is in all respects a continual fight of faith. One can hardly emphasize this strongly enough, in view of many seemingly very pious, but really hypocritical, declarations of faith in Providence, to the effect that this faith is an unchanging possession. If we take its heroes, a Paul

or a Luther, they knew least of all of anything of the kind. But this faith entails further conflict for us of the present day owing to the sentiment of our age, which is always getting to be more widely prevalent, that Faith in Providence has become for us an impossibility, because it sets itself in opposition to the ascertained results of our knowledge. True, the hardest conflict is not that which is waged against these misgivings of the intellect, but the other purely personal one. Yet when there is no remaining doubt in the latter sphere, faith would be injured if it wanted to conceal these doubts of the understanding from itself, or to settle them by shallow solutions. For unquestionably there is here a serious

Problem connected with Faith in Providence

As our mental life is a unity, faith itself is injured in the experience of every honourable man, if that problem is not handled in a straightforward manner. There can be no doubt of the point at which it meets us. It does not appear immediately in our statement with regard to the purpose of Providence, however many obscurities were presented to us by it. At all events it is found to be much more pressing in our assertion as to the *nature and method of Providence*, as to the means which it uses for the fulfilment of its purpose. But this too needs further qualification. It is not the infinity generally which we spoke of as characterizing the process of nature, that causes the greatest difficulties for faith, though certainly these require to be emphatically stated once more. As a matter of fact, it was easier for the imagination to realize God's Providential rule, by using the analogy of human wisdom and power, so long as the earth could be pictured as the centre of a "world" enclosed within well-defined limits. But after

all it is not here where the problem meets us in its characteristic form. It is much deeper, occurring immediately in that judgment of our faith itself by which we are guided, to the effect that everything is a means used by Providence; a proposition which has undoubtedly become quite clear to us in its full significance, only in consequence of the change in our concept of the world.

Everything whatever, we said, serves the ends of God's will in Providence. *But does everything serve them in the same way?* That is the question. Obviously not, according to the conviction of Christians. We have before us a parallel to the doctrine regarding God's World, in which we had to ascribe to it, with all its dependence, a relative independence (p. 369 ff.). So too we have a parallel to the doctrine of the Attributes, regarding God's constant ways of working, where we found that we had to recognize in His Almighty and Omniscient, Omnipresent and Eternal will the ground of all that is real; yet not as if all was founded on it in one and the same way (p. 499 ff.). This idea, which appeared in the previous case in a general and indefinite form, now acquires, in the doctrine of Providence, the extraordinary significance which it possesses for the concrete and particular aspects of our Christian life. In prayer, as we said, the Christian exercises his faith in Providence. That means, according to the whole evidence of Christian experience, not merely that in prayer he interprets the occurrences of his life as acts of Divine Providence, but that he really holds converse with the Father, the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth, and that this converse is likewise a reality for God, for Divine Providence. The Christian brings his concerns before God, and God attends to these concerns, determined as they are by the man's inward condition. And this requires to be described with still greater precision. The fact that man can hold converse

with God, and the way in which he does so,—this certainly depends solely on the other fact that God's omnipotent love initiated and graciously maintains that converse: apart from this, it is nothing but magic and self-deception. But man's consent to do his part in the matter lies with himself, and God recognizes this, takes account of it as being a real condition of His own Divine action. If we only put aside in the first instance all inferences which may possibly be drawn from this position of matters, it will be impossible to deny that the facts of Christian experience are correctly represented. The same Divine procedure affects different human hearts; their answer to God's call is different, and this answer is their act. And by their answer as thus varying and forming their act, God allows His course to be in part determined. Not to add unnecessarily to the difficulties in this matter, let us not think meanwhile of an alteration of the outward life as brought about by the Deity, but only of such as happens in the inner life.

But now there appears the possibility that this simple fact may involve in both its aspects an idea that seems to exclude faith in Providence, the idea of *Miracle*. This statement is readily viewed as a singular one, as a paradox which is not seriously meant; and indeed details of the meaning are as yet kept wholly in reserve. But in truth all depends here on unmistakable plainness, and as to the critical point there can really be no doubt. The converse of the Christian with God as it occurs in prayer especially, though by no means only then, but in all the simplest stirrings of faith, is determined in part by man's free receptivity for God. Hence the idea that all things that happen stand in a connexion which is absolutely necessary is once more falsified. What had to be said from the first regarding the nature

of religion, viz. that it is a mutual relation of a real kind between God and man, man and God,—this is affirmed by Christianity with a gravity which is incomparable. Therefore that difference between the idea of God and the idea of the world which we pointed out in the case of all religions, is insisted on by Christianity as a matter of the utmost gravity. Now for this characteristic there is no more unmistakable expression, although it is one that still requires full and careful explanation, than what we have in the momentous question,—Is the idea of "Miracle" contained in faith in Providence, because the idea of man's real independence, together with the idea of a species of Divine action which respects it, is contained in that faith? The one aspect of the latter idea,—an idea which forms a unity—appears in Ethics as the problem of Freedom ("Ethics," p. 71 ff.), and the other in Dogmatics, bringing up immediately the problem of "Miracle". It may be said—Freedom is the miracle of man; Miracle is the freedom of God (Kirn). The idea of miracle is the more comprehensive, and its most general sense is a contradiction of the idea that all that happens is absolutely necessary.

Here, then,—*in the Doctrine of Providence*—Dogmatics has to treat this problem, because here it is pressed upon us in the most personal relation of our private religious life. And this must really be the position with respect to a genuine article of faith. It is not as if we made our subjective experience the highest standard of Divine truth. Yet how could that be called Divine truth, the meaning of which was foreign to our personal experience? Granting that all the miracles reported in Holy Scripture were received by an absolutely unassailable tradition; if there were no analogy to the Providential care of God as applying to ourselves, even the best defence of them that could be made would form,

perhaps, an interesting pronouncement of theology, but could not be an element of our faith. But now the position is the opposite. Even if no miracle were reported in Holy Scripture, we would be confronted with our problem in Christian faith itself as referring to Providence. In this statement there is by no means a decision given as to whether the Biblical reports may really have a special claim still to be called miracles; but they are taken out of that isolation which would certainly at the outset be fraught with danger to their value for the purposes of religion, and would facilitate the denial of them. On the other hand, the idea of miracle is by no means secured as yet against attacks by the position we assign to it. On the contrary, supposing we allow it the rights of naturalization in the central sphere of our life, we are only the more exposed to the fire of attack. For in that case, it must be brought into strict harmony with the idea that all occurrences stand in a connexion which is necessary. It is just this that makes the position of modern theology different from that of former times. It is only to us moderns that the problem itself has become perfectly clear. Hence, with increasing frequency and with more insinuating arts, people are always coming forward to assure us that, if miracle is sacrificed, the modern world would accept Christianity; that, if its votaries would remove this stumbling-block, the rest of its subject-matter would have an honourable place secured to it in the general mental life of the present. Thus, then, the question is forced upon us whether Christianity can renounce this element without denying itself. And this question has become unavoidable, because we are now concerned not merely and not primarily with some "miracles" of the past, however important they may be, but with "miracle" as a constituent part of faith in Providence. "The conflict with regard to

religion is a conflict with regard to prayer" (Schlatter); this is called the "superstition of Christians," by the opponents of the faith which is definitely Christian (Schrempf). In truth, it is Christian faith in the God who is personal and distinct from the world, in Him as immediately operative: this is bound to appear as superstition, or rather as a foolish fancy, to all Pantheism, even to the highest forms of it.

The course of this discussion is prescribed for us by the subject itself. If so extraordinary matter for objection should be wrapped up in faith in Providence, as we conceived it, we shall have to consider two things. We shall first have to ask whether we really formulated that faith with exactness, i.e. whether the *presupposition* which seemed to occasion this objection, viz. real inter-communion between God and man, was not made too hastily. Next, if that question has to be answered in the negative, whether the *inference* of miracle is really bound up inseparably with that process, whether that offending term is not selected without cogent reason, whether the idea which is denoted by it may not rather be evaded. Finally, in case this too proves to be impossible, whether, after we have formed a precise conception of the idea, we can understand it in connexion with our faith as a whole, and can *defend* it against all assaults from the side of knowledge. Turning to these critical points, and giving closest attention to them even in their details, we deliberately refrain from discussing all other questions, such as may be exhaustively treated by tradition, e.g. the delimitation of human freedom in relation to God's government of the world; for it is understood as a matter of course that the full realization and issue of one's inward attitude towards the Divine will is dependent on God's guidance of the world; but in that inward attitude itself, if it is really free, the whole problem is already involved.

Living Converse between God and Man

The Presupposition

First then,—Is that supposition of ours indisputable which, if consistently followed out, appears to include the obnoxious idea of miracle, viz. the supposition of thoroughly live communion between God and man which finds its clearest expression in the prayer of supplication, and, as we must once more insist, certainly characterizes the life of faith as a whole? In the endeavour to escape the inconvenient conclusion, one may either ENTIRELY DEMUR to the supposition, or qualify it in such a way that it is free from danger. The former bold attempt has little prospect of success, first of all owing to the unmistakable *testimony of Jesus.* He repeated and enhanced the warnings of the Old Testament to make supplication, and the promises attached to earnest and persistent supplication, and that too for spiritual as well as earthly gifts (Luke XI. 5 and parallel passages; Matt. VI. 11). His emphatic reference to the fact that the Father knows what we need, before we ask Him (Matt. VI. 8), and to the circumstance that prayer must be offered in faith (XXI. 21), and must be in His name (XVIII. 20),—all these are only specifications with regard to the matter, the nature, and the ground of prayer, which follow quite naturally from the idea of God as the heavenly Father, which we readily forget no doubt, and get to understand fully only by personal experience. It merely proves how little one is capable of putting one's self in thought in the position of Jesus with reference to prayer, when one says that the exhortation, "Ask, and it shall be given you," is diminished in force, and is declared to be in truth unnecessary, if the Father knows our needs; and that its effect is limited and indeed strictly speaking destroyed, when it has to be "in the name of Jesus" and "in faith" (Strauss). Likewise the

statement that Jesus resolves the prayer of supplication in the last resort into the prayer of thanksgiving, by which it is embraced in all cases and especially in the Lord's Prayer, and that the imperative calls, "Ask, seek, knock," are rather of the nature of encouragements for beginners, is in contradiction to the plain tenor of those pronouncements as well as to the personal procedure of Jesus, apart altogether from the inherent strangeness of the statement. For asking and giving thanks are two different things, however true it is that there is no request prompted by the Christian spirit without thanks for the Revelation God has made, and that there is no prayer of thanksgiving without the request for closer fellowship; and an encouragement which is only for beginners would be no real encouragement. No; the words are meant in the sense expressed. They apply of course to disciples of Jesus who, as being sons of God, allow themselves to be introduced by the Son into communion like His own with the Father in faith; and this communion in faith with this God is at every moment a communion in truth, and therefore also it is special in the case of each individual. Nowhere is there less warrant for set forms than in the world of prayer.

Now the unambiguous words of Jesus make one distrustful from the first of the GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS, on the strength of which the prayer of supplication is wont to be objected to. It is said to be in contradiction to the Christian CONCEPTION OF GOD, and not to be in harmony with the goodness and wisdom or with the omnipotence of God. This assertion applies only to a view of God's wisdom which is foreign to Christian thought, which seems indeed to be godless; as if our supplication guided the Divine intelligence into the right course, when it was unsteady and fluctuating if left to itself. And it applies to a non-Christian view of

God's goodness, as if our prayer determined Him to goodness. Rather with his prayer, the Christian desires only to satisfy the condition on which God's wise and kindly will can be fulfilled in its glorious perfection as toward us, however certain it is that "without prayer of ours He bestows on all wicked men" much that is good. Even among men, a father of high moral principle, resting on moral grounds, can only carry out his wise and kindly will in all its fulness, if the receptivity of the child is spontaneously manifested to him. Then as regards omnipotence, a conception of it which excludes trustful prayer is not the conception of omnipotent love, but a metaphysical idol, which one should not seek to dress out with arguments drawn from religion.

But the prayer of supplication is said to be in conflict not only with the Christian conception of God, but also with the Christian conception of *faith*. It is said that faith is thereby made a power which degrades the Deity, using Him as a means for gaining one's own wishes, doing irreligious work. Certainly this abuse of the highest privilege of a child in the kingdom of God is possible, and in watching over one's own soul or the souls of others, scarcely any duty is so important as that of preventing any such abuse, even when it clothes itself in a religious guise. Genuine prayer does not strive for "indulgence from a Divine Power that is given to dallying, as a boon to its favourites, themselves equally addicted to dallying and sunk in selfishness"; on no account does it ever make itself a tool for "spiritual fortune-hunting" (Herrmann). From such cause religion sickens at the roots of its life, and the confidence which is reposed in it by others is weakened more than by anything else almost—think of "Christian Science," and its practice of faith-healing as a highly flourishing trade carried on by those *virtuosi* in prayer. But when

faith contemplates what is best, viz. the sovereignty of God, His gracious will can and ought "to be realized by it as present, as the great orderly realm of unutterable possibilities, in the best of which faith desires to participate: in this way Jesus prayed" (Fröhlich). To disallow the power of influencing heaven to the prayer of supplication when it is rightly understood, means to deny that there is real converse on the part of the Christian with God, on the part of the child with the heavenly Father. And no limit can be fixed by men for the effect of the prayer of faith, either as respects the degree or the compass of its effect. As regards the latter point, in particular, the distinction between prayer for earthly and for spiritual gifts is by no means one which is justifiable in principle. For we find in experience, and that often and oppressively, that our outward life itself is a hindrance to our fellowship with God. Consequently we make an arbitrary distinction, if we do not bring these troubles before God in prayer, though certainly the subordination of these to the supreme purpose is presupposed as a matter of course here as well as elsewhere. Reservation of the kind does not spring from faith, but from fear of the power of knowledge. And it arises moreover, as we shall come to convince ourselves, without sufficient cause. For to pure knowledge the fulfilment of a prayer for the furtherance of inward life is equally enigmatical. What calls for this sacrifice, a fruitless and a dangerous one, is an idea of knowledge which has not been thought out to the conclusion. Furthermore, faith is not troubled by the oft-repeated objection that it does not pray for "what is clearly impossible, as for the restoration to life of a dear friend who is dead". In such case we have no longer that wealth of "unutterable possibilities" which we spoke of, and hence also we are not concerned with

"impossibility" but with a reality, one in which faith humbly reverences the will of God.

Now since our presupposition, viz. real personal communion between God and man, implies such extraordinary consequences, it is only the more intelligible that, although it is not denied, it should at least be remodelled in a way which entails no such consequences. To deny the prayer of supplication as unchristian is less possible the longer the matter is considered; but perhaps one can MODIFY THE SENSE. We have to show that such attempts at modification lead to denial. This is most plainly the case when it is said that we have only subjective effects from prayer, if it is meant, as in this connexion it can only be meant, that with the aid of prayer the man of faith produces a quickening and soothing effect on his feelings. Only this is seldom frankly asserted, because then every unprejudiced person would condemn the word prayer as a misnomer, and would want to use the word meditation or pious reflection instead. Likewise the saying we often hear—"It is not fulfilment but resignation which is the blessing of prayer," shows for the most part the defect of the same obscurity. The obscurity seems to be removed when others suppose that these "subjective" effects of prayer, together with the prayer itself, are due to God's action, and regard the whole process as a form of Divine activity. But even so, the immediate facts of Christian life have their sense altered, and prayer as real communion with God is denied. The most refined attempt of this kind is the achievement of Schleiermacher, who said that prayer is the herald of fulfilment sent by God Himself, appointed by God along with the fulfilment. He holds that one may therefore really maintain that a thing would not have happened unless there had been prayer; only one could not say that a

thing has happened because there was prayer. This summary statement finds apparent support from the undeniable fact that sincere suppliants do not by any means feel the same joyful readiness for prayer on all the occasions. However, this fact can be otherwise interpreted; whereas the explanation given, inasmuch as it plainly conceives of prayer (so-called) and fulfilment (so-called) as alike effected by the Deity, destroys the fundamental supposition of the whole life of prayer, viz. real communion between God and man.

And there is no difference in this result when we take the most recent attempt that has been made, one which shows still more clearly what the real point at issue is. According to it the fundamental supposition we speak of is really over-estimated by us. For it is found in all religions, even where people ask of God what is most worthless; and it is held that in our religion, on the contrary, all depends on our desire being of the loftiest quality, on our laying ourselves open to the good and gracious will of God, and in that case we rise as a matter of course above the form of prayer to trust pure and simple. In that form of human prayer and Divine answer there is "again perhaps one of those pictorial, anthropomorphic representations which are of the utmost significance for the whole life of religious thought, while they must not be reckoned as truths in the proper sense which can be held with conviction" (Th. Steinmann). As if in any case whatever, the emphasis which is justly placed on the content of an occurrence, as we ask *What* it is, made the question of the *How*, of the ways and means by which it is produced, a superfluous one! And as if in this "laying open of self," in this "placing of self in the proper attitude," in this "trust pure and simple," the question supposed to be settled was not reserved and still unsolved. We only

need to avoid confusing things which have to be clearly distinguished. Nothing is farther from the intention of faith than to assert that it possesses an insight into the processes of the inner life of the Deity: this matter was previously emphasized by us when we were dealing with the idea of absolute personality. But because faith lives by the certainty—"God is in my life as elsewhere, working at its core for my guidance and training," it is certain that it can turn with confidence to this God, and that God has regard to this confidence. The two things are inseparable: if the latter is only a "pictorial, anthropomorphic representation," so is the former, the conviction that God is at the heart of my life.

In short, the *presupposition*, real communion between God and man, of which the consequence is dreaded can neither be denied in the name of Christianity, nor yet so remodelled as to be free from danger. And therefore when others say candidly that prayer has no objective effect, but nevertheless we ought to obey the impulse of the heart to pray (Wimmer), they testify to the great strength of the religious impulse, but also to the meagre amount of clearness in the thought which they bring to bear on it. But in the second place, cannot the *inference* which is dreaded be rejected, or at least toned down?

The Inference

We have a REJECTION of this inference, not in intention but in effect, when it is said that miracles are unforeseen, *unexpected occurrences*, with which a saving efficacy is combined, though as regards their relation to the general system of reality as a whole, we must not, cannot, and dare not say anything definite (A. Ritschl). The man of faith, if he understands himself rightly, should be contented with the truth previously discussed, to the effect

that all reality is grounded on the will of God, and that everything that God wills is actualized (p. 500 f.). And here one gladly repeats the saying of Augustine—"Miracle is not something that happens contrary to nature, but what happens contrary to nature as known to us". We have a more definite expression for the same thought, and one which is shaped by epistemology, in a formula which has already been proposed to us as a solution when the subject was treated in a more general connexion (pp. 255 ff.). It ran thus—Everything that happens must be considered *etiologically and teleologically*, from the point of view of the efficient cause and of the purpose (e.g. Lipsius). Miracle in the religious sense belongs to the latter sphere of thought, and it vindicates its claim for ever. In the New Testament itself, it is alleged, the most important word for miracle is the word sign. This solution can give as little satisfaction now as it did in the former case, where we were dealing with the relation of faith and knowledge generally. The formula, if followed out consistently, leads farther, in one direction or another, than one is willing to go. For no doubt it is quite true that in all experiences the man of faith is concerned with nothing else but God, that he does not dream of asking whether God acts in an "ordinary or an extraordinary manner," meaning to regard with reverence His saving work for him only in the latter case. One can hardly emphasize this too strongly. But as the theory in question understands the statement mentioned above, that we must not, cannot, dare not change the declaration regarding the relation of these saving acts to the main system of reality as a whole into a specific assertion, there is very often a half-concealed specific assertion introduced after all; viz. that we should not and dare not do so, because a decision on the point has already been pronounced in another quarter, from

the side of knowledge. In other words, for the most part the two lines of thought are not seriously conceived as of equal value, but the etiological principle is that which is in the last resort objectively valid, while the teleological is only subjectively valid for the man of faith. With that, however, the man of faith cannot possibly rest; for the vivid reality which we found in the communion between God and man is reduced to a merely subjective idea. But if he dare, can, and must make some affirmation on this matter, he has denied the absolute necessity of all that happens as regards the relation between God and man; i.e. he is again confronted by the old problem. Of course we do not mean to assert that the representatives of the theory before us wish to deny the reality of communion with God. Very often the opposite is the case. But their ostensible solution is no solution; rather would the logical conclusion from their statements be a denial of what they too really want to maintain. The same may be said regarding expositions of the matter which are akin to the above in substance, although they do not make use of the language about two lines of thought. Thus it is said by many with the deepest concern that vital significance attaches to the question, whether we are helplessly bound to a world of inexorable necessity, or whether there is a God in the seat of government, One too whose sovereign power over nature can be solicited and known in experience. Now if the second alternative is gladly affirmed, how can one put along side of it, without a satisfactory explanation, the proposition that the system of nature is inviolable? For though the latter may be declared to mean that by an "inner power" one can deal with the course of nature in such a way that all must serve for the best (e.g. A. Harnack, Robertson),—what modern man can think of the modern idea of the system of nature, and think of

that inner power as in any way independent of it? Or is this expression only culled from the soothing anthology of religious literature? That cannot really be the meaning, for that would be "twofold truth" of the worst description. The aim which prompts such expositions of the matter, and with which we agree, we must therefore seek to fulfil by other means. But first we have to take account of other attempted solutions, which do not reject the dreaded inference, but *tone it down.*

There are, then, those who are specially zealous defenders of "Miracle" who furnish manifest proof, by the definition they give of the idea of miracle, of their desire to lessen the difficulty which exists for the modern consciousness. One class prefer to speak of the way in which the Deity *groups* existing forces, so as to make them means which serve for His purposes (e.g. Kreibig, Menegoz). We may allow the somewhat external conception of grouping to pass without demur, but at all events we must draw the attention of such apologists to the fact that it is only in appearance that they have lightened the great difficulty by this means. For it is just the idea that all occurrences are not connected in an absolutely fixed system to which the difficulty attaches; and there is no harm in supposing that one has stated something of consequence in giving the assurance that "such grouping occurs without any violation of the laws of nature," or even that "the way in which energy is transformed requires a guiding principle, imparting direction to it, even in all the spheres of nature's process". How loosely the idea in question is held by many of its adherents is shown by them when they do not at all regard this "grouping" of which they speak as the wonderful thing that it really is, and reserve the word "miracle" for what is altogether marvellous. But a like objection applies to theologians like Martensen who, doubtless with the best

of intentions, represent miracle as the effect of a *higher order of nature* acting upon nature in a lower grade, and especially upon nature as sick, weakened by sin; adding that such an effect is inconceivable from the lower standpoint, but quite intelligible from the higher position, and that in this sense one can understand even the change of water into wine as "an accelerated process of nature". Now either such a "miracle" is one which is only a miracle in appearance, only an event that transcends our present knowledge of nature, or it cannot be explained as part of the whole system of nature, including nature so far as it is still unknown to us; and in this case the dreaded problem arises afresh, and that too by no means only in connexion with an example like that mentioned. All such ostensible alleviations of the idea which is objected to, only show that those who discovered them have not made clear to themselves where the real ground of objection lies. And finally, we do not get over it, because we do not get clearly at it, if, with certain vigorous supporters of miracle in the most recent period, we content ourselves with the statement that in all that is real, God's working is certain to faith, and that it is infra-Christian to seek it in isolated, special occurrences (Stange). So far as this is true, we have already pointed it out, and shall still have to emphasize it. But when the statement is made only in these general terms, it is false; or, to speak more precisely, it does not grasp the problem at all which springs immediately from wrestling faith, the one that we are here concerned with.

Justification of the Idea

Of old Scholasticism, with the means of knowledge at its disposal, indicated the CRUCIAL POINT, though in a manner which is strange to our present-day thinking, yet with clearness and precision, by this definition—A

miracle is what happens apart from the order of universal nature. True, the expression justly gives rise to the sharpest contradiction. It is intolerable from the point of view of science, because the whole connexion between the wonderful occurrence and all other reality is broken ; as Scholasticism expressly points out, when it alleges that every miracle requires two others besides, one which destroys and one which restores the order of nature. The definition in question is equally intolerable from the point of view of faith ; for what godless independence of God was thereby ascribed to the world, so far as the common course of things is concerned ! But worst of all is that this idea of miracle does not indicate with any precision at all what the important matter is for faith. It is not that the course of the world is suspended, and that the miraculous event is unrelated to any other occurrence, but that worldly occurrences do not preclude real communion between God and man, that in this world something can occur which would not occur apart from that communion. We have an expression which is similarly ill-chosen with that of Scholasticism, when it is said, in language which in form is more compatible with modern thought, that miracle is a violation of the laws of nature. Independence is thereby assigned to the laws, of a kind which is useless alike for religion and science. For the latter, because there is a strange confusion of the laws with the forces which act in accordance with law. For the former, because there is again an independence assigned to the world which is contrary to religion ; but particularly, because there is no indication whatever of the matter which the man of faith is concerned with. He has not the slightest interest in doubting that there are determinate forces acting in accordance with law ; but he does maintain that the ultimate reality is not identical with the system, taken in its entirety, of forces

which are absolutely determinate, and which act in accordance with law. And this idea, which formed the core of the early Scholastic definition that was mentioned, notwithstanding all the imperfection in the expression of it, has now for the first time become perfectly plain, viz. to the modern consciousness. True, the word "miracle" always signified a certain opposition to that "natural" process which admits of calculation; but only in relation to the modern idea of the world was it capable of becoming a watchword in the life and death struggle between theories of the world.

The *modern idea* of Nature, or more correctly *of the World*, conceives of all reality as a unity composed of forces which are absolutely determinate, and which stand in a correlation which is absolutely determinate; or what is the same thing, as capable of being expressed in a formula which embraces the whole world. Not as if that could be attained by any power of ours. And not as if it would require to comprehend all reality in the form of mechanical movement; the differences between the particular spheres of reality may be wholly kept in reserve in such case. The vital element of the idea is rather found in that absolute necessity which we spoke of as characterizing what takes place, however the nature of ultimate reality may be conceived. Now with regard to this idea of absolute necessity we affirm that, if it is understood as the last and highest truth, it is incompatible with faith in Divine Providence in the form which was maintained above, that of real communion between God and man.

For what reason and in what sense this is asserted, no lengthy explanation is needed to show, after what has already been set forth. Enough is found in all that was said about the rejection or toning down of the inference which followed irresistibly from the presupposition

of Christian faith in Providence, when that presupposition is fully recognized, when we do not change its sense. We merely recall once more the subtlest and best attempts to conceal the simple state of the facts. Undoubtedly the only matter of importance is that "God is always at the heart of my life as well as elsewhere, for my guidance and training". Undoubtedly I can gain this inner certainty "not by any kind of external miracle in what occurs," but only "if the occurrence in question is combined in a peculiar manner with the process of spiritual growth in me"; undoubtedly "the critical matter is something else than those things which are striking in their external aspects". Who would deny that? But these statements miss the point which is of critical moment in connexion with our present topic. Have they still any religious value when they are explained thus: What we mean when we speak of trust, especially of trustful prayer, and what we mean when we speak of regard for this trust on the part of God, is an "anthropomorphic visualizing" of the matter? This much, then, such opponents themselves feel, and hence it is that their pious intention always brings them back again to the idea that somehow God in His grace has regard to our trust. But then when they have really thought out the modern concept of the world, and must reject those unsatisfactory modifications of an idea of miracle which is but half cleared up, they see that they are obliged to find new mediating conceptions. Among these, doubtless, the last-mentioned consideration occurs most readily to men's consciousness at the present day, viz. that the modern concept of the world which we speak of is by no means restricted to the view of reality which associates it with the law of causality, with mathematics, and with mechanics. It would be well if this assurance could only furnish some ground

for being at rest as regards the critical point! When defining the modern concept of the world, we required to lay emphasis precisely on the fact that its essence consists of the idea of absolute necessity, and is quite independent of its manifold applications in the different spheres of physical, mental, æsthetical, and ethical science. It is not at all the question of the way in which the nature of ultimate reality has to be conceived that appears here in the foreground; the opposite schools which are so important in other connexions, Materialism, Spiritualism, Monism, do not fall to be considered as of primary significance for our question. But then we are always confronted anew with the alternative which has now been repeatedly mentioned.

We theologians should no longer deceive ourselves on that matter. The great want of confidence, the keen sensitiveness that we meet with, might help us to attain to clearness of thought. The adversaries have an instinctive perception of our unalterable position, of our religious interest, even if we conceal it. It is therefore a fact which is specially to be welcomed, that some who formerly rejected the alternative we spoke of admit that it is unavoidable. Thus W. Herrmann says ("Revelation and Miracle," 1908): "Schleiermacher and many others are of opinion that it is quite possible to conceive of an occurrence as a miracle wrought by God, and to regard it at the same time as a link in the system of nature which is subject to law". But this opinion forms "one of the favourite resources employed by Dogmatics to hide from oneself the exacting nature of religious thought; for what is not subject to law is regarded as belonging to the system of reality which is subject to it," or rather, "one says something that cannot be conceived at all". The expressions used here by W. Herrmann may no doubt be misunderstood; as if the person who

has faith in the living God, and therefore accepts miracle in the sense described by us, wanted to affirm what was contradictory for himself. His opinion is rather that miracle contradicts the idea of nature which we spoke of, or, as we preferred to say, the modern concept of the world, if the latter is admitted to be the ultimate metaphysical truth ; and it is just this that the Christian denies. If Herrmann is understood in this sense, the sense which he himself intends, the conviction maintained by him is no "spasmodic belief in miracles," but a clear position, compared to the fair promise which we have in the following : "The actual process of nature, and the conception held by faith regarding natural occurrences, viz. as being the work of the living God, cannot, we must admit, be so simply conjoined as in the attempt made by Schleiermacher. Only a distant view, when we would actually be placed at the confines of the world as it is conceivable by us, can enable us—from a very far distance—to surmise that there is a unity." "From a very far distance" : that means, if we come nearer, this surmise that there is a unity vanishes (Th. Steinmann. Cf. J. Wendland). But when F. Kattenbach, as against W. Herrmann, makes the reservation on the side of faith, that it has its own concept of nature, viz. that of mystery as inherent in it, or says that God works not in nature but on it, i.e. not in accordance with law, even there a substantial agreement with Herrmann might not be precluded ; indeed the confidence of faith might seem to many to be emphasized with more living effect still. But others will readily understand the statement once more in the sense of that "grouping" which presumably involved nothing hazardous, against which, however, we had to put forward objections in the foregoing. A misgiving of this kind can hardly be suppressed as we turn to Hunzinger's presentation of

the matter, when he speaks again of an "elastic" system of nature; whereas on the other hand, by his resolute correlation of miracle and Divine Revelation, and his interpretation of miracle as "supernatural in the strictest sense," he comes very close to Herrmann's position. If the problem which we are concerned with is thus grasped in its depth and distinctness, it is now perfectly plain why we ventured to describe it above as an inconsistency, although one which is widely prevalent, that Divine Providence is often admitted in reference to inner experience, and rejected in reference to the course of things in external nature. That is a reactionary distinction, resting on defective insight into the modern concept of nature and of the universe. In the latest idea of reality as absolutely determinate, there is no room in principle for this distinction; its watchword is absolute necessity throughout.

But now what are our COUNTER-ARGUMENTS, in refuting the modern concept of the world, so far as it is opposed to Christian faith in Divine Providence, in the sense which we have set forth? That is to say, we refer now, from the nature of the case, not to those reasons for faith which suffice to support faith itself, but to the arguments which are valid at the bar of knowledge, as against the position that the truth of the idea we speak of is indisputable. And we take that idea, moreover, when it is thought out with perfect clearness. For all those who accept it are not really to be taken alike seriously. In truth, a refutation is unnecessary as regards those, e.g. who, with strange inconsistency, put forward the modern concept of the world against the Christian faith, and at the same time treat their own actions as free as if it were natural to do so; whereas they would obviously have required to include these also in that absolutely determinate system of reality. And specially

strange is it when they represent the continuance of the whole order of the world as endangered by communion between God and man, while they are not apprehensive of anything as the result of their own "acts of intervention in the course of the world". But further, the more consistent supporters of the idea of the world which we are dealing with, if their views are determined substantially by nothing else than the habit into which they have grown by working at natural science, we cannot forthwith allow to be the proper adversaries of our faith in Providence. In replying to them, it often suffices to bring before their minds the fact that an absolute generalization from the principles which hold good in the sphere of Dynamics, is not only unproved but unprovable, were it only from the circumstance that even the most complex movement cannot be compared with the most primitive sensation; and that it makes no difference to that fact though there is an appeal to the law of the Conservation of Energy, e.g. or to the favourite word Monism (pp. 381 ff.). In this connexion it is more and more difficult not to hear the calls of philosophy which warn men to be cautious. For example it is said: "Natural science is a presentation of the system of reality as one which forms a unity, exhibiting relations of dependence, in accordance with law, which hold good between determinate amounts of space, time and number". "Natural science is a presentation in definite language of reality as it exists in accordance with law." "The principle of the Conservation of Energy asserts that, in the sphere of the *savant*, a definite magnitude which he has introduced in a combination that is definite for thought, or in a calculation, reappears at the end of the calculation" (Lipps, at the Assembly of Naturalists, 1906).

The concept of the world which we refer to can be

proved in *one* way only, namely by demanding in the name of the idea of Causality as a law of thought, a kind of knowledge which "deduces from a basal *datum* with logical necessity the particular forms of existing reality, and the whole series of its developments" (does so in principle, not as a matter of fact—this qualification of course is understood by all who have discernment). But in saying this, we have by no means given an exact definition of the law of Causality as a law of thought. As such it only says—"There is no occurrence that is not the effect of a cause," but not of what kind this cause is; or it says that everything that we think of as real, we must think of as part of a system, but not what sort of system it is; so that communion between God and man cannot be described as an impossibility for thought. However, this more particular account of the law of Causality as a law of thought readily seems to be a subterfuge, unless it is further qualified by the following consideration. We can make an advance towards our opponents by stating that the ideal of their concept of the world, as we have defined it, is also ours, if and so long as we are moving in the sphere of assent-compelling knowledge, where there is understanding in the strict sense; for what else indeed should that be but a causal interpretation of the necessary connexion of all that happens? But we also know the essential limitation of this scientific ideal, and we understand why men's insight into that essential limitation must increase, in proportion as the ideal is more and more generally recognized, and as it gains ever greater triumphs; indeed, why every step on the way to supremacy which is won by this ideal, makes the immovable barrier which is found in the nature of it always more apparent. For we know why we cannot regard this knowledge of ours as absolute, cannot deny that its truth is only relative.

But this being so, we know that we have no reason for refusing to acknowledge the truth of communion with God in the form in which we experience it, as a personal relation to One who is Himself the ultimate Reality; though certainly the words by which we testify to this belong to human speech, and consequently, as we have often reminded ourselves, have a symbolical character. Indeed, it is not even necessary to appeal directly to our religious experience. Even Logic involves as its deepest problem the question whether and in what sense "its principles are axioms or postulates," and "whether it can rationally be expected to tear up the roots from which it grows up itself, to destroy the independence of the will". Compare with this, e.g. Sigwart's "Logic," II, at the beginning and conclusion; Dilthey's "Introduction to the Mental Sciences;" Rickert's "Limits to the Formation of the Concept of Natural Science". In short, we come back enriched with the concrete matter of the doctrines which led us up to our present problem, to the discussions in Apologetics on the question of principle, bearing on the subject of assent-compelling knowledge and personal experience (pp. 146 ff., 163 ff.). With the proof that the modern concept of the world, so far as it excludes full Christian faith in Providence, namely real personal communion between God and man, cannot be established in the name of thought, the Christian Church can have a good conscience with reference to that faith, and the inner unity of self-consciousness in the case of the man of faith is assured. With this there is combined very much freedom for discursive thought in regard to details. For example, the conclusions of E. Troeltsch as to "Contingency," as to the essential limitations of "Rationalism," have made an impression on many who stand somewhat aloof from the form of statement given above, and perhaps look upon it with real distrust. The

important matter for Christian faith is guaranteed in those conclusions, too, if the "existence of things," and that too in the case of "what is great as in the case of what is little," is "an incomprehensible miracle"; assuming that such statements are strictly thought out, and especially that the polemic against "Supernaturalism" sinks in vague generality. For there can be no doubt of this, that the attractive language of the same theologian, derived from religious experience and undoubtedly true, which tells of an "activity of the supersensuous that breaks through the phenomenal in nature," and of an "act of free devotion which interrupts the mechanical course of nature," asserts, if consistently followed out, a real "Supernaturalism". But in that case one can oppose only the supernaturalism that arises from defective knowledge, that is regulated in respect to its form by a concept of the world which for us is no longer possible, but not the pure and genuine supernaturalism which is posited with faith in the living God.

There is only one other matter that might perhaps be discussed, namely whether we should be contented with the defence just indicated, as based on epistemology, or whether it is possible, by means of some positive evidence supplied by some speculative essay, to throw light on the idea that the course of nature is not fixed. This might be attempted, say, in the direction taken by Lotze. The laws of nature, he says, are not altered: that is a contradictory idea; but its elements according to their constitution lie open, we may be sure, to the influence of God as the sole ground of their reality. In such an essay, moreover, the purpose of the idea which we considered, one which is generally so obscure, that of the grouping of things on God's part, would receive its due. The idea was obscure, as we had to do with it

in the foregoing, for the mere reason that those who maintain it often do not realize with any clearness what an extraordinary claim they are making, one which runs counter to the modern concept of the world; and it is equally obscure on becoming explicit, because it presupposes a relation of God to the world which is quite external. Neither objection applies to a speculation like Lotze's. And by others it is applied in a directly religious sense, in some such way as the following: "We do not influence the external phenomenal form of things with our senses, but we influence their essence by the power of our spirit, and can act with real effect on the roots of all existence" (Lhotzky). Indeed, even the suspicious designation of miracle as "a higher order of nature" might, from this point of view, have a rational meaning assigned to it, without our requiring to retract anything that was said about the objections mentioned above. "In the order of nature there are marvels of a higher and finer species, in presence of which we stand still and adore, and which God prepares for those who trust Him." But we make no use of such ideas, so as not to obscure once more the perfect clearness of the position. For the great cause of offence to modern thought, the view that nature is not a closed system, always remains. Besides, an attempt like that of Lotze, when fully thought out, leads to that mystery of time in its relation to the eternity of God, which we have described as the one great mystery (pp. 506 ff.). And that is equally, indeed even more immediately, the case, if we make such an assertion as the following: "The Almighty performs each of His miracles through the instrumentality of the world which is for Him a whole, whereas we stand in it as in a universe for which we know no bounds" (W. Herrmann). Or: "God, who is Almighty Love, creates the world at each mo-

ment, absolutely as means for His purpose; and this creation is eternal preservation". Such assertions, however, are always mere descriptions of the problem before us, not a solution of it. Faith can gladly and thankfully accept them, because they give fine expression to the certainty it possesses that, humanly speaking, for God the question which is so intricate for us is one which is solved with a Divine simplicity,—because it does not exist at all; a position of matters for which the religious language of simple Christians often finds plain terms which hit the mark with great certainty—think, e.g. of the statement of Claudius regarding Samson, who carried off the doors of the gate of Gaza "without prejudice to the causal nexus". But in this way faith acknowledges with perfect frankness the limit that is now fixed, and, as it is convinced, necessarily fixed for its knowledge. Only, in order that the objection may not be raised once more at this point, that justice is not done to the unity of knowledge, we may in conclusion draw attention expressly to the previous discussions on this point. In large classes of people, that unqualified scientific candour does not yet prevail in regard to it, which would be of so very much service for really scientific knowledge. Many who have nothing more whatever to offer in the matter of principle, yet put forward in their polemic the objection just mentioned, and raise hopes which they fail to satisfy with anything which they themselves set forth. Thus we deliberately take this to be the end of the matter, and we can regard ourselves as being in agreement even with the last mentioned assertions, as respects the spirit and purpose of them, in so far as we proceed on purely critical lines instead of depending on speculation which is but half finished, and in this way, by furnishing proof of the essential limit we spoke of for our assent-compelling

knowledge, show that faith in the living God is irrefutable. If this is done, even the idea of "twofold thought," which we previously rejected, can acquire a meaning to which no exception can be taken, namely because every suspicion of "twofold truth" is now precluded.

To mark out the particular paths which might be taken in advancing to the great end is no longer a task for Dogmatics. It is of more importance for it that the motive for such investigations, taking us as they do to its furthest limits, should once more be set forth. They are by no means intended to supply a proof of the possibility of miracles which would awaken in the Christian man confidence in the Providence of God, and in particular encourage him to pray with the certainty of being heard, or even lead him to employ a species of bookkeeping in registering God's acts of government, here as "natural" and there as "miraculous". In that case, all would really be withdrawn that was set forth at the outset, regarding the true grounds of faith and regarding the nature of it. The only matter that such inquiries are concerned with is that the Christian who trusts in God's guidance, and gives proof of his trust in prayer, should clearly realize, first, what kind of judgment regarding the processes of nature is implied by this trust of his,—no less than the extraordinary one, that for God the course of nature is not a closed system; secondly, how easily this judgment is concealed and partially denied, owing to the force of prejudices in the modern consciousness which are widely prevalent; thirdly, how far we can nevertheless have a good conscience from the conviction that here we are confronted really with prejudices, not with instances of ascertained or possible knowledge. Thus we have to enforce the idea in a more and more simple and convincing manner, that the reality

which is accessible to assent-compelling knowledge and ordered as a tissue of laws, is not the whole and not the ultimate reality that we can experience, and ought to experience. We have no empty appearance in the knowledge of that reality which is accessible to assent-compelling knowledge; we have real knowledge, and such as is prized most highly by the pious person, as a good gift of God. But it forms no hindrance to communion with God, as would be the case if that reality we speak of were the whole of reality, and reality as knowable in all its relations. We can give account to ourselves of the limit to our assent-compelling knowledge; we can understand on what grounds connected with our mental organization the limit rests, and how it does not destroy the unity of our personal life; but we learn also for what purpose it continues for us still, namely in the interest of our faith, our fellowship with God. Compare all that we have set forth from time to time on the subject of the one great mystery.

And now, after the conception of real communion between God and man has been recognized and justified in its fundamental significance for the life of Christian faith, we are able to attain the right attitude towards the Miracles related in Holy Scripture. On the other hand, if we begin with the latter, we raise obstacles in the way of the recognition of them, which it is difficult to surmount. As a matter of fact, the traditions in question do not correspond with our experience, at all events not perfectly: God's working, and His help and providential care are generally displayed in them in a more striking and imposing manner. If therefore one confines what is specially striking at least to the first days of our religion, and declares that that was necessary for Revelation as the fundamental stage, this idea may be essentially correct; but when it comes first, it

readily appears as a mere means of getting out of a difficulty; and the claim of other religions too to rest on miracles, partly very like those of Scripture, confirms this impression, and lays all "miracles" open to suspicion. On the other hand, if their claim to be at home in the life of Christian faith is shown to be based on principle, the force of this objection to a more manifest intervention of Divine activity is weakened; we are prepared to understand it from the special necessities of the period of commencement, of the original Revelation. Many events reported in the New Testament appear then as another stage, but not as another kind, of that special working of God for our salvation which is to faith a matter of certainty, even as regards the present day; and we understand how the first recipients of the Revelation might have had more need that God should draw near to them, in a way which was calculated to produce conviction, than we have, who walk in the path which is now opened up, and in which we have the privilege of that communion with God which is a lasting marvel. But then we understand at the same time that this greater evidence did not signify so much for them after all as it would signify for us with our altered acquaintance with the course of nature, i.e. that even the "miracles" of the first period were wrought for men of faith, and did not apply compulsion to those who were indifferent. So too, even the defectiveness and indefiniteness in the tradition which brings us these "signs" is not necessarily an objection, but serves rather to strengthen our faith. And in general as to details, just as we meet this tradition with a readiness to believe, we do so also with complete freedom of mind. With all this we adhere, in the circumstances of our time, to the basis which the first disciples themselves found to be assigned to their faith (Matt. XII. 38 f. and parallels;

Acts x. 41). In short, the external limit which is set up by an external type of Apologetics between the "miracles of the historical Revelation" and the "experience known to our faith in daily life," a limit which has not for a very long time been the means of proving and confirming faith, but rather of doing injury to it, is abandoned. But it is abandoned, not because there is now no experience at all that deserves the name of miracle, but because our experience, viewed in its deep significance, is in all seriousness marvellous.

With these considerations we have already touched on the last question, by means of which the opponents of genuine belief in miracles think they can prove it after all, and that conclusively, to be erroneous, the question whether a miracle is *knowable*. But however much ability they are accustomed to employ upon it, they themselves plainly let out the truth that it is a sham-fight in which they are engaged, inasmuch as they allow in the end that even the best-attested miracle would be incredible, because it is impossible. Therefore the question of knowableness, which is discussed with every display of acumen, is carried out by these controversialists themselves to the question of possibility, which we have already answered. This applies to miracles as received by historical tradition, as well as to the recognition of them by contemporaries. The claims which would have to be made for the satisfactory attestation of a miracle are first settled with the aid of learning—full publicity, in a part of the world which was open to all; unlimited ability and readiness to ascertain the truth, and so forth; so that Renan, pushing Hume's keen-witted inquiry to an extreme length, at last insists on the same conditions as those arranged for a scientific experiment carried out in presence of the French Academy. And what is the conclusion from all

this high-flown language? It is the old pronouncement of Spinoza—"Miracles and ignorance I take to be synonymous". With the limitation of our knowledge, it can in fact never be proved that an occurrence for which we find no natural causes has none such. That a dead person should prove to be alive is impossible; were his restoration to life authenticated with ever so much evidence, we would yet have to assume that we had deceived ourselves—for it is impossible.

While this discussion of the knowableness of a miracle is valueless, in so far as it is itself based on the impossibility, it nevertheless makes it peculiarly plain once more to faith what it understands on its part by miracle, and why it does not allow itself to be deprived of that possession; and further, that it feels itself responsible only for its own interpretation of miracle, and therefore also must be made responsible for that alone —namely for the well-grounded conviction which we spoke of, that the course of nature is not fixed. It might give up the word "miracle" altogether, were it not that the matter which it is concerned about is most plainly expressed by it, viz. the idea taken in its full sense, of living communion with the living God. To true faith, that requirement of the trustworthiness of particular miracles, in the sense that they are capable of being indubitably authenticated, is entirely foreign; a complete mistake is made there as to the nature of faith. We must apply here as elsewhere, and here with special emphasis, the basal thought of Apologetics that, owing to the moral quality of our Christian faith, owing to the nature of God as a God of holy love, there cannot be demonstrative knowledge of God,—because there ought not to be (p. 148 ff.). And yet no less than everything is at stake, even real communion with this God who is brought near to us in Christ, if miracle in the

sense we have put forward, but only such miracle, is denied. And just because faith is interested in miracle only for the sake of its own existence in the form just explained, and in that sense alone, not only does that objection of our opponents fail to touch it, but they show by raising it that their fundamental idea of the nature of faith is entirely different. Nothing is farther from faith than the desire to hunt after particular miracles which are indisputable, and which in the last resort actually force themselves on the unbeliever, such of them especially as assume the form of answers to prayer. It takes the prayer of supplication to be an expression and confirmation of the position of sonship as towards the heavenly Father. It craves for nothing under hand and seal, but one asks in faith and gives thanks in faith, leaving it to God's guidance whether and in what way the fulfilment will be granted, but always struggling to attain to faith in the fulfilment. It is not true of this miracle that "it makes life horrible; that heaven robs men of earth and dries it up; that it is a hypnotizing by others or by ourselves, a delusion of such a kind that the escape from it is an escape from a hindrance to the life in God" (Björnson, "On Power"). But it is also by no means a mere blind and dumb feeling out towards "the Infinite," a "longing which reaches beyond what we know and see". No; the whole of life supplies great experience to the Christian of communion with the living God, such as may be called without any ambiguity the great miracle, humbly revered as such. A fine practical exposition of Exodus xxxiv. 10—"It is a marvellous thing that I will do with thee"—is given by Hilty in the third volume of his work on "Happiness". For other matter see "Ethics," p. 282 ff.

Faith in God the Father

Divine Providence and Sin

The most general point of view from which Dogmatics has to consider the ruling activity of God for the realization of His kingdom in a historical development of humanity (cf. God, the World, Providence), is that of the educative love of God. If this historical development is a sinful one, then that ruling activity of God in the sinful development of humanity has two aspects. On the one hand it makes this development become a preparation for salvation, since it is counteracted by manifestations of goodness, as God makes a progressive Revelation of Himself—directly among the chosen people, who were distinguished for Religion; indirectly among the peoples who cultivated Beauty and Law, in the history of thought as well as in that of conquest and of commerce. With this positive education there is combined the negative, by which sin is judged; just as in the matter of Divine Love itself we had to lay stress on the opposite pole of Holiness. And even after the fulness of the time has come (Gal. iv. 4 ff.), Divine Providence, in accomplishing its purpose of salvation, proves to be of the kind that judges sin. We are thus brought to the concept of Evil. True, it is by no means exhausted in the reference it bears to sin, but to determine the relation between the two facts, sin and evil, is our principal task in this section; what will remain to be said of evil can easily be connected with that basal question.

Evil is an obstruction to the life of a sentient being. Without thus regarding the actual or possible sensibility of the life which is obstructed, we do not conceive the idea with precision; however true it is that the obstruction is objectively present, it is only that which may somehow be subjectively experienced that is evil, just

because it is an obstruction to the life. Thus something may be evil for one which is not so for another, or need not be in every respect; because, while it is an obstruction to his natural vital feeling, it has no such effect upon his true life, his chief end, but could rather be recognized as the means for attaining it. In respect of *range*, we may distinguish on the one hand between evils which are identical, general or universal, e.g. death; and on the other hand such as are limited to the individual, —violation of honour or special illness. In respect of *cause*, we have those which proceed from external nature and those which emanate from the will, one's own or another's, from the will too either as acting with purpose or as passively led and careless.

Some *connexion between sin and evil* is asserted in all religions, a connexion too as regards both cause and purpose: God ordains evil as the punishment of sin. But this connexion again is differently determined in the different religions, according to the way in which sin and evil generally are understood; in particular, according as sin is strictly distinguished from evil or not. Thus Pharisaic Judaism asserts a strict proportion between sin and evil,—so much sin, so much evil; in fact sin and punishment are equalized even in outward form. The Greek, however, is inclined to view sin itself as the great evil apportioned to humanity. All this we have in every conceivable transitional form, above all if we pass in thought to more distant realms, say, to the world of India. Jesus repeatedly pronounces in the most emphatic manner against the Pharisaic view, which is as untenable as it is loveless (Luke xiii. 1 ff.; John ix. 1 ff.). But yet He did not deny that there is a most real connexion between guilt and evil, or find in guilt itself only a misfortune to be lamented; rather, He raised His Church to a higher point of view. And the

judgment to which He leads it up is essentially a judgment as to the purpose of evil, though He does not fail to shed at least the necessary amount of light on its cause. In the Christian Church, the East has always inclined more to the Hellenic, the West to the Jewish view. The conception which is truly Christian, and is emphasized anew by the Reformation, has always to guard against each of these deviations, as every one can learn in the school of life. Even Schleiermacher's formula, at first sight so attractive, which declares that the totality of evil is occasioned by the totality of sin, cannot be maintained with entire truth. At all events we must attend to our governing clue, carefully distinguishing the cause and the purpose of evil in relation to sin.

Sin as Cause of Evil

It is undeniable that there are evils which WOULD NOT EXIST IF NO SIN EXISTED, in the first instance such as are *directly* due to sin. This is most unquestionable as regards the greatest of evils, viz. *guilt*. For the principal obstruction to life is sin itself, contrariety of the will to that will of God which is at once what is most precious and most real, not only the good but the chief good. Guilt is just this—opposition to fellowship with God who is good, that fellowship which alone is the chief good, or true life; and therefore guilt is the greatest obstruction to life, the greatest of evils. When we defined the idea of guilt in discussing the doctrine of Sin, emphasis was laid on the fact that it describes sin as our personal act (p. 433 ff.); here it is placed on the circumstance that it is an obstruction to life, an evil. Yet in each of the two cases the stress is merely put on a different side of a fact which forms a unity. Certainly guilt as an obstruction to life can and must be called

the direct consequence of guilt as our act: our heading itself of course does so designate it in express terms. But it is of more importance to emphasize the indissoluble connexion. It is this which is the most terrible fact of our life; and even the best form of statement is but a slight indication of this crushing reality. We desire to be without God; in this desire to be oneself without God, we experience an existence in which we are alone with ourselves, an existence which is the exact opposite of the life that is aimed at. This frightful connexion operates with more certainty than the most trustworthy mechanism—for we cannot escape from God. We become guilty, unhappy in the deepest feeling of our hearts, because of opposition to the good for which we are designed, in which alone we can have life for ourselves, the denial of which is consequently the destruction of our life; and the sting of guilt as the greatest evil consists in the reproach that we ourselves are the guilty parties. But while guilt as our act has different degrees, so also has guilt as an obstruction to life. And besides, in the latter case there is specially brought to view that subjective element with which we previously started. Even when there is equal guilt, the perception of it, the *consciousness of guilt*, differs greatly in the first instance; often the guilty person has that consciousness only in the form of a vague feeling of discomfort, of a load which he himself does not understand, of a void within himself.

But it is not of guilt only that it holds true, in a way which admits of no doubt, that it is directly and inevitably introduced along with sin. This causal connexion is likewise found in the case of a host of *evils of so many forms*, that their names even cannot be enumerated without much tediousness. Introspection bearing on the matter must suffice for us: all sin whatever en-

genders obstructions to life. Our own and that of others tells thus on ourselves and on those about us. This truth applies to every sin against ourselves, our neighbour, the world, or God. And in all these instances the effect is such that either the obstruction to life is confined to the inner life, or it extends also to that of nature; in the latter case arising directly, as when there is acute or chronic danger to life (again in the form of intention or of passive neglect), or indirectly, as due, e.g. to an inherited burden resulting from excess. As a special evil of this kind, occasioned by sin alone, we have already got to know, when treating of sin under the heading of "A world of offences," that by a process of continuous generation sin must bring forth sin. And this holds true both of the extension of sin in ourselves and of the spread of it in our interaction with others.

Even yet we have not exhausted the evil that springs from sin. We have mentioned up to this point only the kind that is directly caused by it. As *indirectly* caused by it, there is that boundless ocean of evils, which, let their cause be what it may, inasmuch as the heart is restless, and the sense of guilt is unremoved, and the general feeling in life is troubled in consequence, are felt in actual experience to be evils, veritable obstructions to life as nothing before has been, or come to be felt with a keenness of pain hitherto unknown. In a thousand cases what ministers to the advancement of one person really comes to be evil for another, appears to him as evil. And it appears thus to him, not in the sense of an illusion which he could quickly dispel, but of a reality which is fearful for him as he actually is, and as he cannot help being till he has become at heart a different person. On this account it is safer to use with caution the conceptions subjective and objective.

But now THE QUESTION arises whether *all* the evil

which is caused by sin is included in what has been said. To speak more precisely, it is a twofold question. The evils mentioned up to this point, which are undeniably occasioned by sin, directly or indirectly, are conjoined with sin, according to the judgment of the Christian, by an inviolable appointment of the Deity: they would not exist if there were no sin. But now the *first* question is whether, apart from this inviolable connexion, there are also evils *directly* ordained by God, or as is also said, "positively" ordained; e.g. loss of means inflicted on ungrateful children, and the like. This question has to be answered in the affirmative, provided that Christian faith in Providence, in its fuller development, is to have the right to exist; and that too both with reference to individuals and to whole communities. Only here as elsewhere every trace of a Pharisaic judgment, as well as of the claim to have certain knowledge of all God's ways, must be blotted out. But in the stillness of self-examination it often marks an actual turning-point, the entrance on a new life, when a particular evil is understood as the consequence of a particular sin; and in the life of a people submission to a particular judgment is fully warranted, the same fundamental conditions being again presup posed.

The *other* question is—Can all evil whatever be understood as occasioned by sin? This attempt to refer *all* evil to sin, an attempt which is often made in the name of advanced faith, must be frankly rejected. Or rather, the idea of evil has to be more carefully restricted. To imagine every obstruction whatever removed from the arrangements of the world, and that too from nature as well as from social life, would mean that we imagine progress at an end, that we deny the idea of history, and generally the idea of a world which is distinct

from God. Without felt opposition, finite moral personalities cannot develop in a world of space and time: the stimulus to reach forth to what lies before us would be lost (cf. p. 433 ff., 443 ff.). The Book of Genesis itself indicates this in its own way, when it speaks of the task of dressing the garden and keeping it, which was assigned to our first parents, but conceives of the work which is lost because it has no distinct aim, the work which causes us to groan, as the consequence of sin. The former kind of "evil" is taken into account in the pronouncement—"It was very good"; the latter is not. Hence it is a dispute about words when it is asked if all obstructions are to be called evil, even those which are necessary apart altogether from sin. The fact that, on the understanding that sin exists, they may be felt as specially oppressive evils on account of sin, has already been pointed out.

In this connexion, as we are inquiring about the amount of those obstructions to life which are necessary, the old puzzling question of the relation of *Death* to sin comes in. Traditional Dogmatics views it as being in all respects due exclusively to sin; our modern consciousness regards it with equal absoluteness as a necessary arrangement of nature. The wide-spread explanation of theology, one which plumes itself on representing a higher unity, viz. that on account of the sense of guilt we ought to regard death, which is in itself a necessity of nature, as a consequence of sin, is as far from furnishing a solution, at all events unless fuller particulars are given, as the watchword of two lines of thought in general; and well-known passages of the New Testament (Rom. v. 12 ff., viii. 10; Heb. ii. 14 ff.) find an echo in many parts in the deepest feeling of Christians, even when one is by no means blind to the difficulty which they present in details. A more careful

treatment of the subject is necessary. Our theologians of the past declared without proof for an everlasting life under earthly conditions, failing to see that in so doing they involved themselves both in a contradiction of thought and in opposition to other passages of Scripture, especially to the idea so plainly expressed that the man who is of the earth, that flesh and blood (1 Cor. xv. 45, 50), cannot inherit the kingdom of God. On the other hand, our modern thinkers deny without proof the possibility of any other passage into a higher state of existence than that which appears in the form of death as people now experience it, the dismal mystery of which even the fairest flowers of art merely conceal and do not illuminate. The horror in prospect of the step into the unknown, into emptiness and darkness, into "that country from which no traveller returns," much more still the horror in prospect of the entire cessation of all personal action, of sinking completely into passivity, and as is often the case, with the more or less distinct sense of personal demerit—should not this horror be the consequence of sin as separation from the source of life? And if serious reflection on death calls forth even in a Paul not only the triumphant utterance in Philippians i. 21, but the anxiety shown in 2 Corinthians v. 1 ff., that readily leads to the idea that, when man is "unclothed" instead of "clothed upon," the occurrence is connected with sin by Divine appointment, that in place of a necessary departure from life, there has happened what we experience as death. But if such thoughts appear to anyone to be still too remote from our experience, he can fall back at this point, as we do elsewhere, on that one great mystery of time, and say that death is ordained along with sin by the eternal God, without requiring to declare sin to be necessary on that account (p. 474 ff.). Then he may form a similar conclusion as to

other enigmas in the course of things on earth, such as devastating calamities in nature. In reference to the suffering of beasts, however, even if he finds in Romans VIII. 21 ff. a saying of profound significance for reverential thought, he will be specially mindful of the limits which are marked for a System of Doctrine which is in touch with reality; and he will also avoid every appearance of being initiated into all the mysteries of God. Having regard to this condition, he is not obliged on the other hand to approve of diving into the inner nature of the beasts, after the fashion of modern Buddhists, or in a manner which is ostensibly scientific.

We are again on firm dogmatic ground when we realize in thought the *teleological* connexion of sin and evil.

The Purpose of Evil in Relation to Sin: Punishment

What is the purpose of the evil which is ordained on account of sin? This is really the form in which the question must be put in the present connexion. For any obstructions to life which are necessary for the sake of progress have their purpose, of course, in that progress, are entirely means for education, simply an incentive and stimulus to men to press forward. But here we are speaking of the purpose of the evil which is appointed on account of sin. The answer to this question which is generally recognized is—PUNISHMENT. But the indefiniteness of this word, as applied to the relation of God to man, is the source of many vague conclusions, which are often fraught with momentous consequences for the Christian life itself, for the joyfulness and also for the seriousness of it. In order to understand what is meant by saying that the purpose of evil is punishment, we must understand what the purpose of *punishment* is. In the sphere of law, punishment is a curtailment

of one's rights such as involves pain, ordained for the transgressor by the community in its legal capacity, for the purpose of bringing home the inviolable character of the system of law to the consciousness of the offender. But if we want to know what punishment means in the relation which God bears toward man, we must start with the idea of God as holy love. The greatest evil inflicted by the Deity upon the sinner, viz. guilt, exclusion from communion with God and so, too, from true life in the sense stated above, has the purpose of making the sinner know and acknowledge with pain, through the consciousness of guilt, that he has put himself in opposition to what is absolutely inviolable, the good will of God, and by so doing has shut himself out from true life. That follows without question from the fact that God is *holy* love; but from His being holy *love*, it follows at the same time that the purpose of God is not exhausted in bringing home to one in this painful way the inviolable character of His will, but aims at producing a change of mind. Thus as long as the sinner can still understand the purpose of Divine punishment, or has not yet become hardened, all such painful visitations are *educative* as surely as they are *punitive*: we have punishment pure and simple, nothing but judgment, only when, in God's finding, there can no longer be any thought of sin committed in ignorance (p. 435 f.).

Consequently the purpose of all evil is punishment in the sense mentioned, so long as the sinner has not permitted that ultimate purpose of all evil to be fulfilled in his case, has not suffered himself to be led to recognize with grief that the will of God is inviolable. On the other hand, when this has happened, when the sinner has laid hold of God's pardoning grace in penitence and faith, no evil is a punishment for him in the same sense, now that he is reconciled. It cannot be

otherwise, if punishment of the characteristic species is guilt, as it is understood to be experienced in the sense of guilt: if the purpose of this punishment is attained, the punishment as such is removed. Otherwise God would not be using everything as means subordinate to His purpose. This purpose is fellowship between Himself and us. We with our sin have crossed it. In conjunction with sin God has ordained guilt, the greatest evil, exclusion from fellowship with Him; but not that He may abandon His purpose, rather that He may fulfil it. He makes this greatest evil operate as means for His purpose: if it has done its work, it ceases to exist.

In *practical life* these truths are of the greatest importance. The *unreconciled* person has by no means simply to consider evil to be punishment; for him it is really punishment, as surely as God is real. This applies immediately to guilt, and indirectly to every other evil which is experienced with a sense of guilt that is not yet dispelled, and is more or less distinct. At the same time, what was said about "necessary evil," holds good with regard to him also, in all individual gradations; indeed even the evil which is justly felt to be punishment serves for him at the same time, again in all conceivable gradations, as means for advancement; of course only relatively, before the change in principle in his relation to God. From him who is *reconciled* the guilt is taken away, "so that in all eternity there is to be no more mention of it"; and so too punishment proper is gone, the only kind, strictly speaking, that exists, because its purpose is attained. All evil has become a means of promoting the highest purpose, appears as the suffering which furthers education, probation, purification. This attitude of the Christian towards suffering is specially manifest in the judgment which is

formed regarding death, as expressed by Paul in Philippians I. 21 ; as also in the attitude assumed towards the consequences of former sins, which are by no means always, though they are often removed in their external aspects, but from which, inasmuch as the guilt is forgiven, the sting, consisting in their character as punishment, is extracted. We have therefore to say that for the Christian there is now no evil at all, in the same sense as there is for the non-Christian, namely because there is now no punishment in the same sense. But it has also to be said at the same time that evil presses on him in a unique manner ; he suffers from it with more sensitive feeling than the non-Christian does, in so far as in his sympathizing love he now begins to endure in all its weight the burden of the greatest evil which is laid on others, viz. their guilt,—just when he knows that he is himself delivered from it, and in so far as he understands all evil, whether it affects others or himself, as a postponement of the glory which shall be revealed in the sons of God, in order that their essential worth and their external condition may harmonize eternally with each other (Rom. VIII. 18 ff.).

Christian faith in Providence, in its developed form, contains the THEODICY which it is possible to supply from the standpoint of Christian faith,—on the basis of that faith, and in consistency with the nature and the measure of it. Even in the Christian world many are troubled by the old pronouncement of the Epicureans and of Hume,—If God desires to prevent evil and is unable to do so, His power is defective ; if He can do so and does not desire, His will is at fault ; if He has the will and the power, whence comes evil ? This statement proceeds on suppositions regarding sin, evil, and the relation between sin and evil, which are foreign to Chris-

tian faith. For the Christian, sin is not God's act. If we start with sin, we have now come to see the sense in which evil is intelligible in respect to its cause and purpose; but also that not all obstructions to life whatever are opposed to God's purpose of love. We have here to emphasize the point once more that this faith in Providence, as understood by Christianity, has to be gained by a fresh conflict in the case of every individual and every period. The great witness to its truth, Holy Scripture, is also the great register of these conflicts; the most deeply significant is the conflict for the preservation of faith in the Atonement itself, when, owing to sufferings at the time and the oppression of sin, the temptation in the soul completely shakes the confidence one had in salvation, and seeks to turn that which exemplifies the Father's educative love into punishment once more (Heb. xii. 1 ff.).

This reference to what was previously stated on the Doctrine of Providence must suffice here, unless all that was then said is to be repeated from the point of view of our "Theodicy". Thus it is not to any defective sense of the magnitude of the problem that the shortness of the treatment of it under this heading is due. One that underestimated it would have to live here as a blind person, and with more reason than ever in our world of to-day. Indeed, without any qualification the whole temper of modern thought which is unfavourable to Christianity, as that thought is described in the Introduction to this System of Doctrine, might be further characterized by the attitude it assumes towards the problem of the theodicy. The entanglement of spirit with nature, and the powerlessness of spirit in general which is often apparently so palpable, and still more the poor advances made by the Holy Spirit, even in the Church of the faithful which desires to be formed and

led by Him, the Christian Church—we only require to use such language and we are in the thick of a hot conflict waged in behalf of our ultimate convictions and the certainty of Christianity. But it is just when one knows that he does not frivolously underestimate the seriousness of such questions, and likewise that he does not in any way overestimate those formulæ which commend themselves as professing to be solutions,—it is then, as one bears in mind the task and the powers as well as the limits of a system of evangelical doctrine, that he may assert emphatically that the right attitude towards problems of such magnitude is presented in the positions of that Doctrine of Providence which gives expression to our actual faith.

The term Theodicy, one to which distinction attaches, does not lose but gains, when there is this reference to simple Christian faith in Providence, as faith in the living God. This was brought home to many, perhaps, in the days when the earthquake at Messina (1908), as formerly that at Lisbon (1755), stirred the whole world. The thoughts that were given forth on this matter, expressing the average opinion of the multitude who do not give their minds to philosophy in other circumstances, were in many cases little altered in the course of a century and a half, but were only more freely uttered, owing to the greater freedom from ecclesiastical tutelage. So far as they were really altered conceptions, they showed for the most part that, as compared with the optimism of the former period, they sprang from a temperament that was fundamentally pessimistic, and that, as compared with any teleological thought, they were derived from a naturalismwhich had often little clear knowledge of itself, but was all the more unqualified on that account. Yet there was not wanting, too, language of profound reverence in view of the incomprehensible,

and the bold assertion of the superiority of man's personality to nature, and of the fact that without enigmas the former could not attain its real significance in the latter at all; nor were there wanting striking evidences of the call to practical charity which is implied by such catastrophes. What Goethe felt in boyhood, as he answered his father that the justification for God's action was "perhaps simpler than the preacher thought"; what was announced in the philosophy of Kant and Fichte regarding the value of human personality in that natural world which is to a large extent incomprehensible; what practical Christianity preached through action,—this has, after all, become an element in the deepest feeling of many at the present day. It reaches certainty and clearness only in that full Christian faith in Providence which is conscious of its foundation, and which as such has at the same time renounced in principle all dogmatic omniscience. How inseparable this faith in God is from faith in our eternity in God, and how it is on that account preserved alike from any overestimate or underestimate of the earthly life, must once more be expressly pointed out in closing: much talk of the theodicy is intelligible only on the supposition that the present life is taken to be all (cf. Hilty, "Sub specie aeternitatis"). So too we have once more to point to the individual character of the experience which faith has of the living God; and Luther's saying that the Christian's life is "an eternal Lord's Prayer," may at the same time protect this individual experience again from all suspicion of being of a paltry individualistic type, and moreover devoid of any objective ground.

Finally, let us repeat the simple thought which proved to be the decisive one in aspects which were ever new,—at the close of the Introduction, of our Apologetics, of the Doctrine of God and the World: all

these pronouncements, though they had been far better conceived and established, are valueless, unless they describe the one supreme object of religious knowledge, God in His working upon us, for those who are receptive of this through their trust, for the Church of the faithful or of those who are prepared for faith—and such are the "true believers". Guided by the same fundamental idea, we complete the transition to Christology.

FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD

The general requirement as regards method that the more difficult the subject of discussion is, the SIMPLER SHOULD BE THE STARTING-POINT which we seek, is specially deserving of consideration at the commencement of Christology. This is so whether we have regard to the History of Doctrine, to the New Testament, to ecclesiastical usage, or to the general consciousness of our age. In reference to all these, our situation at the present day shows endless complexity; there is all the more need of simplicity at the commencement. The more precisely we get to know the particular systems of the past, the more confusing is the impression we have of them. As to all of them in general, we may be harassed by the question, whether they are concerned with the One Personality by whose name we are called. And yet if we go to the classic authors, what unanimity there is on the main point! And this although in the first instance we can only make the general statement about them that, without exception, their faith in God is inseparable from their faith in Christ. The condition of New Testament research creates still more misgiving in a countless number of people. For example, we have actually the attempt at constructing a species of Christianity without Christ, founded on the view that for opposite conclusions, as that He claimed and did not claim to be the Messiah, we can make appeal, presumably on equally good grounds, to the sources in which, accord-

ing to the witness of the right and of the left wings together, there is almost nothing that can be proved to be certain. And yet it is just in these New Testament books that His Figure always shines forth anew, and in all cases alike surpasses the power of invention, and notwithstanding all the uncertainty in many details, is not indistinct in this respect that, if we are again to use the same expression which we formerly applied to the History of Dogma, it is His work which is apparent when the first disciples, like those others who came after, believed in Him. With this consideration we are immediately brought to the heart of our practical life. Here too we have apparently nothing but questions without an answer, when the name of Jesus Christ is mentioned, to the grief of some, and to the scarcely veiled delight of others. And yet the clouds are always rent anew, when a person who is concerned only about God is "apprehended" of Jesus, if we may use the expression of Paul for the experiences of lesser natures: any other phrase is also suitable for the matter now spoken of—as, that He meets with him, gains his confidence, binds him to Himself, stills his desire, calls him to the imitation of Himself, becomes his Lord. This effect is not nullified by the conflict of Church parties, which make each other's faith a matter of dispute, inasmuch as each of them judges or despises the faith of the rest. In fact while this strife goes on, the public preaching of Christ is to a great extent essentially the same among them; in preaching, neither one section nor another lives only by its theology, and it is just in those circumstances that their preaching is effective. Above all, it is unnecessary at this point to set forth anew what applies to the modern consciousness in general (cf. p. 9 ff.), with special reference to its attitude towards Christ. There is no greater offence for it than to be thus bound to Christ;

and nevertheless a countless multitude stand silent before His Figure, a multitude on whom nothing else produces an impression.

Thus, in recalling briefly how necessary it is to have a simple starting-point, on account of the far-reaching confusion that prevails, we have already seen *what that starting-point is.* It is no other than that momentous paradox of our religion that in it the Founder is the object of faith, that most peculiar characteristic of it which already engaged our attention when we defined the nature of it (pp. 91 ff.) and proved its truth (pp. 172 ff.). Or if this expression seems to be quite too definite at the commencement, we are concerned with the question whether and why trust in Jesus Christ is in any way involved in the personal relation of trust in God. But of necessity that starting-point is at the same time the loftiest mark at which all Christology aims ; is, rightly understood, the whole of Christology. For the precise determination and proof of this idea amounts to a decision on the question whether there is to be henceforth a doctrine of Christ at all in a System of Christian Doctrine, or if anything that has to be said of Him will find its place in Christian Ethics, supposing that in those circumstances, without that basis in Dogmatics, there is still any such thing as Christian Ethics.

The proof that *faith in God,* as Christianity regards it, is and remains *faith in Christ,* consists naturally in the answer to *two questions.* One, directly connected with Dogmatics, is the question whether and in what way this peculiar claim can be established as an inherent part of the system, and is therefore the question of the religious significance of this Person : why cannot we as Christians believe in God without believing in Jesus ; and in what sense have we to believe in Him ? The other is the question whether a Person of the kind, so

uniquely significant for faith, is really presented to us by history. Each of these questions has already engaged our attention in Apologetics (pp. 172 ff.). They appear now, even more than in that former case, in such gradation that the second can only be treated as an assumption in Dogmatics, while the first can be expounded in more detail, as being essentially of the Dogmatic order. But it is only the more necessary to realize now the intrinsic homogeneousness of the two. That which is most certain in respect of its actual existence, however great and wonderful it might be, cannot be an object of faith, if it is not intelligible in its meaning. Just as little can this be said of that which is fullest of meaning, if it does not actually exist.

This self-evident truth is by no means always treated as self-evident. Otherwise it would be impossible that in opposite camps of theology, the pronouncements made on the religious value of faith in Christ should be so vague, and also that, alike on the so-called right wing and on the left, the historical reality of this Person could be treated even occasionally as a matter of comparative indifference. For the latter topic, a reference to the proofs given in Apologetics is sufficient (pp. 216 ff.). As regards the former, two things have to be remembered. On the one hand, for many representatives of present-day orthodoxy, the foundation of faith in Christ consists in the truth that God alone can redeem us. This truth is incontestable; it ceases, however, to be applicable to the problem before us, when we recall the equally incontestable truth that surely there can be no thought of duality in the Godhead. Naturally that saying, "God alone can redeem," is always sure to produce an impression of a general kind; but it is so indefinite an impression that for deeper reflection, it becomes a matter of indifference. Indeed, to a large extent the fatality,

so to say, has overtaken "orthodoxy," that it often declines to enter into this matter, ever since the old definite position, satisfaction through the God-man, one which was clear in itself, has been given up by it, or at all events divested of its former clearness. Thus, e.g. the inference which is a favourite one with many, that if Jesus forgave sins, His Divinity must be admitted, is deprived of all power to produce conviction; however valuable as a starting-point this fact when rightly applied may be. Besides, in the case of many of those who adhere to this new orthodoxy, we have their changed attitude towards the old doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine which had been for the old divines an unassailable presupposition. On the other hand, upon the so-called Liberal side, many specially energetic opponents not only of the old dogma, but of faith in Christ of any description, have a favour for statements like these—"Jesus by his own power will make way for himself, will gain fresh influence over men's hearts, will give them what no theology of the facts of salvation can give them, viz. trust in a human person who, by the demands he makes and by the comfort he instils, by casting them down and lifting them up, imparts such pleasure and such strength, that they are induced to live in the light of God's Fatherly love" (cf. Bousset, Wernle and others). These are refreshing proofs of the power of Jesus; but if they are put forward in opposition to faith in Him, they are very obscure. For it is just this that forms the great question of Dogmatic Christology, how far Jesus imparts light and power such as draw men to the life in God. It is precisely this that it would like to be able to teach,—how far He has this power, how far therefore our faith in God depends on Christ.

But because the two questions go together, it cannot be surprising that inexactness in the treatment of

the one should prejudice the treatment of the other. The suspicion that a person so uniquely significant for faith is not to be met with in history, makes one indifferent to the inquiry as to how precious he might be, if he were real. Contrariwise, indifference to the value of such a person for the ends of religion weakens the impulse that leads to unwearying, wholehearted investigation of his history. But in untold instances, the deepening of faith in Christ has fructified the work devoted to His history, and the latter on its part has rendered the most valuable services to faith. How true it is that faith in Christ, in the sense of the first times of the religion, and the investigation of those times, act and react on each other ; that much apparent and even real danger is created for that faith by history, yet the enrichment which is derived is much greater !

But now how do we get an expression which is the simplest possible for this fact that *our faith is bound to Christ ?* Substantially, there can be no other than that which was supplied in Apologetics. For it was by starting with the peculiar character of our religion that Apologetics was led to see in Christ the anchor of certainty. But there the standpoint was quite definite, that namely of certainty : we can only, as we saw, attain to enduring certainty, if God makes a perfect Revelation of Himself to us, works upon us with unsurpassable effect in this historical Person. At present the question is—In how far is faith in God, in its whole inmost nature, inseparable from faith in Christ ? Our inquiry now goes more to the core of the matter ; it is concerned with the inmost nature of our communion with God, with that connexion between it and Christ which is indissoluble. This indissoluble connexion must be elucidated by our starting with the idea of God and of the blessing of salvation imparted by Him, and

by the idea of saving faith thereby defined. On the former occasion this most central inquiry was directed to a particular side of the matter which we now learn to understand in full. If our faith in God is faith in Christ, it must be the case that the proof of the truth of Christianity has its firmest foundation in this matter of fact. "He who desires to experience God, cannot pass by Jesus in his life, but must experience Him through Jesus" (Thieme). But the answer to the question which is so simply formulated, however certain we are that it must be equally simple itself, cannot be reached by means which are simple. We prepare our way for it by briefly recalling THE PRINCIPAL ANSWERS WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH. They will show us what we have to attend to in the answer we give.

Faith in Christ, which is in a general way the common specialty of all Christians, is necessarily understood differently when we come to details, according as God and therefore the blessing of salvation bestowed by Him, and in conformity with this, faith, saving faith, the subjective aspect of the religious relation, are differently understood. As is the God of salvation and that salvation itself, so is the Saviour and the faith that brings salvation. This follows from the fundamental conceptions of the nature of the religion.

Now the blessing of salvation, as viewed by the Christianity of the *Greek* world, is deliverance from death, is immortality, and fellowship with God is participation in His eternal life, and God Himself is inexpressible pure Being, transcending all our conceptions, which apply to the world of objects that have parts. In consonance with this, Christ is the inexpressible miracle of the union of the immortal Divine substance with that which is human and mortal,—of the two

"Natures" in one "Person". As such, as God-man, He is the object of our faith. But then faith can be nothing else than a secret participation in that secret of the God-man, most directly through the Mysteries or Sacraments; in such wise, however, that an intellectual assent and the corresponding kind of life are inseparably bound up with the process. The special conditions in their details, which are determinative for this general theory, one which is imposing in its kind, such as the idea which is of great prominence in practical religion, namely that of redemption from the demons through Christ's victory over them,—these may be passed over in the present connexion.

In *Western* Catholicism this view of Christ and of faith in Him is preserved. But new features are added and are more strongly emphasized. The blessing of salvation is conceived in a more ethical fashion, compared to the Greek Christianity just referred to, yet not in a purely ethical fashion in our evangelical sense; being understood as Justification in the sense of a mysterious infusion of supernatural grace, such as qualifies one for the accomplishment of meritorious works. Thus Christ, the God-man, is not only the unutterable mystery which we spoke of, but precisely as God-man He renders the satisfaction for the infinite guilt of sin, which man ought to render but cannot, and which is itself the greatest merit. Being present in the Church as the institution appointed for salvation, especially in the sacrifice of the Mass and in the sacrament of Penance, He dispenses the invigorating gifts of salvation which are available through His work, on the ground of His Incarnation. As thus present, He is the object of faith; and faith in Him is intellectual assent to the Dogma, and obedience to the requirements of the Church, the object being to receive the grace of Justifi-

cation which was spoken of, through the Sacraments which empower one to gain eternal life on the ground of one's merit. We observe that here too, God gives in Him as the God-man, or Christ as God-man gives, the blessing of salvation. But He actively accomplishes it, whereas in the Greek Church His miraculous existence suffices. And not only does He accomplish it in us, but He does this after He effects it before God: His action is directed toward God, and not toward us alone; in the first instance, indeed, toward God. Accordingly our faith in Him is to a greater extent than among the Greeks an act of the understanding and a subjection of the will, although the sacraments operate or co-operate in producing it.

For the *Reformers* God is in principle a gracious will; the blessing of salvation is therefore conceived in a purely personal and ethical sense as fellowship of the sinner with the personal God of holy love; in other words, as forgiveness of sin, and with it life and blessedness, such as can only be experienced through personal trust. This trust is effected by Christ as being the reflection of the Fatherly love of God (Large Catechism, 2, 65), and as being the Sacrifice offered for us (Conf. of Augsburg, 2); in the former He is God's representative before us, in the latter our representative before God. As such He is the object of faith; and faith is trust. We observe how closely faith and the object of faith are connected by this means. That is the case for the reason that trust in God's grace is the whole of religion, and because this grace is present for us in Christ. And at the same time we see that those two courses, the one which proceeds from above downwards and the one from below upwards—God acting upon us in Christ, and we being led to God by Christ—are both followed out, but owing to the conception we have of

faith are much more intimately connected than before: it is as being "Sacrifice" that He appears as "Reflection". Then in the Churches of the Reformation, the Christology of the East and of the West is not only continued as it was by the Reformers themselves, but is often used as a guiding-clue for the new principle which is drawn from Scripture. Hence even among us, when we speak of faith in Christ, many think first of these presuppositions which have been taken over, both in respect to Christ as object of faith and to the faith itself which is reposed in Him.

Rationalism knows no faith in Christ, holding a position which we find for the first time since there has been a Christian Church. For it knows no blessing of salvation in the specifically Christian sense; indeed, though it is a strong expression, it knows no fellowship with God at all, such as God accomplishes by imparting a gift, but only such as man wins for himself by his own effort. In the relation which lies at the base of religion, the one factor, viz. God's condescending approach, is thrown back almost entirely behind the other, viz. man's elevation of himself to God. This "moral self-melioration" requires, we may say, an example merely, not a Saviour in whom one has faith. Elsewhere, we have insisted that it is but shallow thought that leads one merely to depreciate Rationalism, which by its earnestness of moral effort can put religious sentimentalism to shame; and also that its religious conceptions admit of being greatly deepened, a work which has been essayed with earnestness and success, especially in the German Idealistic philosophy of religion, and in part also by the present-day advocates of the historical treatment of religion. But the judgment we have expressed in this present connexion holds good in principle notwithstanding. Our question how far Christ is the object of

Christian faith falls to the ground, because Christ is not recognized in that light at all.

Schleiermacher on the contrary proclaimed with new and telling effect that our faith is completely bound to Christ. In the Christian Church we experience the transition from the consciousness of sin to that of grace, Redemption as a strengthening of the God-consciousness, and the extinction of that lack of blessedness which is connected with obstructions to it. This experience signifies a participation in that perfection and blessedness of Christ, which has to be conceived as an entrance of the archetypal Substance into history, indeed as the actual presence of God in Him. Therefore we believe in Christ as this creative archetype of the religious relation. And faith is receptivity for the work of Christ, and so too it means an experience of the communication of His life. Thus, in contradistinction to what we find in Rationalism, Schleiermacher knows a God-consciousness effected by God as the highest form of human life, a veritable blessing of salvation. This is connected in the simplest way with Christ, dependence on Him being shown in the religious life itself. Hence there is faith in Him.

These answers to the question what it means to believe in Christ, *are all instructive;* and so too is the fact that Rationalism has no answer, and the reason why it has none. Now the answers must be carefully attended to, even for the reason that all of them exhibit connecting links of some sort with Christianity as it was first preached, though none of them coincides with it. This is the case with regard to the way in which they conceive the gift of salvation,—as eternal life, justification, forgiveness of sins, power of the God-consciousness and blessedness; and with the way in which, in consistency with that view, they conceive the Saviour,—

as the Son of God made flesh, as the substitute who renders satisfaction, as the reflection of the love of God, as the creative archetype of humanity. It appears too in the way in which they understand faith. What will be of most importance for us in all these respects is the way in which the Reformers and Schleiermacher understood the matter—the fine psychological analysis given by the latter ; the determination of the process of faith as respects its substance, in the case of the former. Schleiermacher's God-consciousness is not so unmistakably a personal relation between God and man as is the trust in God's grace which we find among the Reformers ; especially as with him guilt passes into the background. And will it not follow from this definition of the blessing of salvation, that the realization of it is not connected with Christ so inseparably as it was at the Reformation, rather that the personal Saviour is constantly in danger of becoming the mere principle of salvation ? For participation in the strength of the God-consciousness, a consciousness which is really imperfect in all cases, does not so surely demand a religious estimate of the Person as does the certainty of the forgiveness of sins. But then whether those answers of the Church in past times have still any significance for us, will depend on whether they are essentially consistent with that given by the Reformation, and therefore form a substantial element of the answer which is the simplest and most convincing for our position at the present day.

Before we try to give this answer, we still require to indicate the special difficulty which is found from the *confusion in the linguistic usage*, as respects the terms chiefly employed in discussing the question before us. The bestowal of the blessing of salvation through Christ is, we said, the reason why we speak of faith in Him. But now it is imparted to sinners, who have yet

to be brought into fellowship with God, to be delivered from some sort of obstructions to that fellowship. To describe this fact, the words REDEMPTION and ATONEMENT have been used from the first, in our religion as in others. We believe in Christ as the Redeemer and Author of the Atonement. But however familiar the words are to us, words which could only be avoided with some trouble even in the short survey which we have just finished, the fact is equally undoubted that the precise significance of them is by no means fixed. What is held in common by all who use them is only the idea of a removal of obstructions, in the case of the word Redemption, and of an adjustment of the relation between God and man, in the case of the word Atonement. But then their conceptions immediately begin to run apart. What are the obstructions which are removed by Redemption, and which of them is dealt with first—death or sin, the power of sin or the guilt of it? Next, what is meant by saying there is an Atonement with God? Does it signify only that we are admitted by God into the state of peace with Him, or is something done also for the removal of an obstruction which is found on the side of God? and what is that obstruction? According to the difference in the answers given to these questions, one must form a different conclusion as to the significance of Christ, and also as to the nature of faith. How far is Christ Redeemer and Author of the Atonement, and how do we participate in His Redemption and Atonement?

A few examples will suffice. *Redemption* is, in Mark x. 45, deliverance in the first instance from death; but manifestly the act is connected with sin, and is accomplished through the intervention of Jesus, who offers up His life as a gift which is precious in God's sight. With Paul (Col. i. 14 and parallel passages), Redemp-

tion is deliverance from the guilt of sin, is forgiveness of sin, and that too somehow through the death of Christ. In Luke xxi. 28; Rom. viii. 23 and parallel passages, Redemption is first of all deliverance from death and from all evil. In Luther's Catechism the word Redemption is viewed in all these relations. With Schleiermacher it means the removal of the obstructions to the God-consciousness, the strengthening of the latter, therefore not the extinction of the guilt of sin, but of its power, by a participation in the strength of the God-consciousness of Jesus.

There is no less diversity in the interpretation of the word *Atonement*. Paul understands by it (Rom. v. 1 ff.; 2 Cor. v. 19 ff.) the restoration of peace between God and the world, and conceives of it as an act completed on God's side in the death of Christ, but in such wise that the death of Christ is at the same time described as being somehow of value for God (2 Cor. v. 21). This reference to God is made very prominent in Anselm's doctrine of satisfaction rendered to God, who requires to be propitiated by the God-man, and in our early Protestant writers on Dogmatics; but in such wise that with Anselm substitutionary punishment is excluded, while with our old divines it is the principal matter. Their idea of satisfaction, mostly toned down in a vague fashion, many moderns seek to maintain with their favourite word Expiation. Now whereas in the case of all those who have been named as yet, the Atonement has reference in spite of differences in detail to the guilt of sin, it signifies according to Schleiermacher participation in the blessedness of Christ, i.e. essentially in His freedom from the sense of evil. On the other hand, Ritschl once more thinks chiefly of the removal of guilt, and identifies Reconciliation with Justification, but in such wise that it includes that new direction of

the will Godwards which is immediately occasioned by forgiveness. And in contradistinction to the early writers, he emphatically rejects the idea of penal substitution, but without denying the value even for God of Christ's action and suffering.

In order to put an end to this confusion of language, many prefer to use the word Atonement for the change effected in the relation to God by the removal of guilt, and the word Redemption for the breaking of the power of sin; and as they do so, now the one and now the other is put in the first place, though doubtless in the Evangelical Church Atonement has the better right to it (cf. J. Kaftan, Reischle). Yet even though this use of the words were more widely prevalent than it is, we would still have to doubt whether the facts are duly represented by it. For the numerous points of view—even those mentioned above themselves—which are warranted by the facts are not sufficiently allowed for. Thus at present scarcely any other course will be left except *to set aside these words which are open to misunderstanding*, because differently understood by every one, and to speak *in the simplest possible way of the facts, looking at them from the most important points of view.* Enlightened by this investigation of the terminology, we resume the task which is of critical moment, and having regard to the answers furnished by history, and resting on the ground of the record of Revelation, we proceed to seek that answer to the fundamental question of Christology which is MOST SUITABLE FOR OUR COMPREHENSION OF THE MATTER.

This procedure secures yet another advantage for us. The ideas Redemption and Atonement readily bring the blessing of Christian Salvation in too one-sided a manner under the point of view of sin and grace. Certainly, when rightly understood, it is the decisive

yet not the only one. In the New Testament itself, and then in the history of our religion, along with the "saving of the lost," there is the message of the Kingdom of God; along with the idea of Redemption, there is always in some form, though very variously expressed, the idea of the perfecting of humanity. To this corresponds the twofold significance of Jesus as Redeemer, and as the Head of the new humanity. In the case of Schleiermacher, along with the form which includes sin and grace, there appears with special distinctness that which exhibits the archetype entering into history, the completion of the Creation. The two points of view can be enforced in such a manner that one would logically exclude the other, and the History of Dogma furnishes examples enough of this; but in themselves they may both be admitted without contradiction, indeed they demand each other. We have already pointed out the double-faced aspect of this conception which is yet a unity, when we dealt with the first definition of our religion (p. 84 ff.), and since then we have always really though not expressly had regard to it. If we now abandon the ambiguous words Atonement and Redemption for the reason stated above, at once the other point of view of the completion of the Creation has justice done to it in a natural way, as it corresponds to the fundamental definition referred to, and to the developed Christian doctrine of God, the World and Man; and this while the point of view of sin and grace is not prejudiced in any way.

All those answers to the question how far our faith in God is faith in Christ, exhibit on deeper reflection a common foundation, and this common element has two aspects, though in the last resort they form a unity. The one common fact is that Christ appears somehow as One who gives, bestows salvation, who works on us

for our salvation. Otherwise the essential nature of religion, especially of our religion, would be destroyed, and there could be no thought of belief in Him. Religious trust means receiving, consenting to have a gift bestowed on oneself by Him who is capable of satisfying this deepest yearning for salvation. If our believing in Christ is to have any meaning, He must somehow or other prove Himself active for our salvation, and we must stand towards Him in this relation of receptive dependence. Without that, there can be no thought whatever of religious trust. The other common element, which cannot be separated from the first, is that we have no *senseless* duplication of the saving activity, and consequently of the object of faith. It will never be possible to defend this idea of a work of Christ for our salvation which appears *along with* the saving work of God, from the charge of utter senselessness; and accordingly Christ cannot possibly be the object of faith along with God. Faith in Christ does not appear along with faith in God: Christianity holds earnestly to the faith in the One living God. If we take both the statements together, we may say that what is *common* to all those answers is that they conceive the work of God for our salvation as so inseparable from the work of Christ, and the work of Christ for our salvation as so inseparable from the work of God, that our trust in God for salvation is for that very reason a saving trust in Christ, and our trust in Christ is trust in God. But while they have this in common, the above-mentioned answers are very different, the *differences* in the interpretation of faith in Christ corresponding to those in the interpretation of the blessing of salvation, viz. to the particular ways in which fellowship with God is conceived. The *dictum* premised by the historical survey has therefore held good—*As the*

blessing of salvation is conceived which proceeds from the God of our salvation, so is the Saviour and the saving faith. But we have still to point out at this preliminary stage that in the basal principle which we spoke of, there is involved a conclusion, the significance of which will always appear with increasing clearness. And it is that, however high may be our estimate of the fact that Christ accomplishes some work *in reference to God*, and therefore of the worth of Christ in God's sight, this always falls into the *second* place: in the *first* there stands the fact that *God works in Him.* Otherwise we fall into contradiction with our main proposition, which is immediately established for religious experience, and does not need to be proved at all. This position of matters too can easily be proved by all the examples mentioned in history. The very strong emphasis which was laid on the fact that we have a Representative before God, say in the Old Protestant doctrine of penal substitution, could only have been so effective in the religious sphere as it was, because Christ was regarded at the same time from the other point of view which was mentioned.

Consequently our task can be no other than that of defining in the manner which holds true for us, the content of our proposition, in the first instance only a formal one, relating to the unity of the saving work of God and Christ, a proposition which received so varied content in history. And we do so, according to what was stated above, on the ground of our conception of the blessing of salvation, as it has been described in the whole of the foregoing. Now this *blessing of salvation*, determined purely in accordance with the facts, while we purposely set aside the expressions Atonement and Redemption which easily create confusion, is sonship to God in the Kingdom of God, perfected fellowship

between God and man, and that too for sinners ; this relationship being viewed as a unity exhibiting two aspects, viz. as a movement of God towards man and of man towards God ; as the being, life, and work of God in man, and the being, life, and work of man in God,—the "Incarnation" of God and the "deification" of man (pp. 39 ff., 80 ff.). Looked at expressly from the point of view of the doctrine of Sin, the blessing of Christian salvation is not in the first instance deliverance from death and from evil generally, but from sin, and from sin as opposition of will, more precisely as habitual and radical opposition of will ; and not in the first instance from sin as power, but as guilt, and from sin as being in respect of its content essentially concerned with religion, as unbelief and alienation from God. Or it may also be said that the blessing of salvation is personal trust in the pardoning love of God, and includes strength and encouragement for the subjugation of the power of sin, and a pledge of the extinction of all evil (cf. Doctrine of God and Man, and "Ethics").

This blessing of salvation, this personal fellowship with the personal God of holy love, cannot be *realized* in any manner we please, but only in a way which is perfectly definite, *answering to the blessing itself*, namely through the work of God in Christ. The reason why it cannot be realized at all by our *own* act, in thinking, willing or feeling, nor again if that act is conceived "in an ultimate inquiry" as God's act, as God's work in the form of our subjective experience,—this has already been shown in our Apologetics. And now that the nature of our religion is more precisely ascertained, this is much more evident on the face of it ; otherwise our religion suffers of necessity in its most vital substance, especially in what concerns the consciousness of guilt, a matter which is most clearly illustrated when

we recall Rationalism. But another point is of much more importance here—it is also the case that not *every* idea about the working of God in history, indeed about the *historical realization of the blessing of salvation in Christ*, if one is only earnest enough with it, suffices, when one's knowledge of the Christian salvation has once become perfectly clear. This applies, e.g., to the idea of a natural, mystical union of God and man, and to the Western development of this Oriental Christology. Rather it is only the *true personal energizing of God in a real historical Person* that furnishes adequate means for realizing that personal fellowship with God. For any other energizing of God would not be really personal, but would lead us back to aimless, mystical fanaticism, and to aimless exertions of our own thought and will. We experience the saving work of the God who is that Holy Love we spoke of, as pardoning and raising to perfection, we gain trust in the saving work of this God, because this historical Person so acts on us that, in His working on us, we can experience the eternal working of God; because He awakens such trust in Himself that, in trusting Him, we trust God. Such action of such a Person, however, is *truly personal*, only if *He Himself* acknowledges *in personal trust* that God works in Him; only if He desires to be in God as God desires to be in Him; in other words, only if He realizes in perfection in Himself the religious relation which He is going to realize in us. Even among us men, and all the more the higher the relation in the case comes to be, personal fellowship does not become real except in this form of personal action; all else is to no purpose, or it is only preparatory and introductory. Trust is awakened only by trust. Now here we are concerned with trust in God; only if He personally works on us, through the life of a real person which contains in itself all that He

wishes to effect, does He create trust in us. When this is known, one of the commonest and most telling objections to a serious estimate of Jesus in the religious sense is completely obviated as a matter of course,—the objection that He whom we find everywhere in the earliest records to be the subject of faith cannot possibly be the object of faith. If we enter deeply into the nature of God's working, of God's Revelation of Himself in the sense of our religion, we arrive at the opposite conclusion: only a man who believes, prays, contends, can call forth trust in the God in whom he believes, in whom he desires to believe. This decisive truth must place the whole subject of Christology as treated in detail in ever clearer light.

If Christ is the object of faith for this reason and in this sense, because fellowship with God in the distinctively Christian sense becomes a reality through the personal working of God in Him upon us, we gather further from this *what it signifies to believe in Him.* It means nothing but having trust in Him as the one through whom God works saving trust in His saving work; but just for that reason it does mean having trust, the word being understood in all the depth and comprehensiveness that are intelligible only in this connexion. This trust far exceeds all intellectual assent, though it is quite obvious that this is included; and all mere effort of will, though doubtless it is action of the loftiest description; and all the glow of mounting feeling, although unquestionably it is life and blessedness. This idea of faith has to be developed later.

This then is the answer to the question how far our faith in God is faith in Christ; this is the simple starting-point and goal of Christology which we were in search of. How that answer is related to the manifold answers given in the history of the Church, and, to go

further back, to the original confessions of faith in the New Testament,—this has partly been indicated already, and partly has yet to be set forth at greater length. And further, express reference may be made to a link of connexion with the modern consciousness. The idea of Evolution, which is often felt to be only an antagonistic one, can become a means for making faith in Christ more intelligible. This appears in so far as that idea sharpens one's faculty for noting the historical connexions and the circumstance that such a Person was subjected to historical conditions, and enables one to understand the one thing which is necessary in Him, more clearly than it was possible to do so long as He was completely withdrawn from the process of growth, and was viewed, not in the light of history, but only from the point of view of changeless existence, and consistently with that as the sum of all perfections; but for that very reason could never produce the full impression made by that reality which pulsates with life, the reality without which He is for us only a beautiful idea. And on the other hand, the idea of Evolution loses its indefiniteness, which is in the last resort meaningless and comfortless, when it is conceived as a means for bringing to us the Mediator between God and man, Himself one with God.

In the discussion of this fundamental question, we have purposely considered, as was made plain at the outset, only the fact that Christ's work as applying to us is an indissoluble unity, and how far that is so. For it is only when that is the case, that there can be any thought of faith in Him. But now it must be pointed out all the more clearly that the other point of view from which the work of Christ has likewise been regarded at every period, must not by any means be excluded. It is due to the fact which we have dealt with

in the preceding pages, to the nature of God's working on us in Christ, that He who thus works in us with an influence deriving from God, in whom God thus works on us, likewise contemplates in His action some kind of effect on God, and that, as He is of unique value for us, so He is for God Himself; in other words, that He is our representative before God, as he is God's representative with us. However, this is not yet the place to treat fully of that matter. The decisive truth only suffers as regards clearness if it is too quickly connected with this idea, one which is undoubtedly well warranted. For the two points of view cannot possibly be put on an equality. But if one has to be put before the other, then doubtless, for the reasons we have indicated, it is the former. If the other is to assert its right, naturally this can only be because it presses itself upon us as a matter of course, if we make that first one plain in all relations.

But is not our answer, even though the further elaboration of it is presupposed, unsatisfactory for this reason that a series of the very hardest questions of Christology does not even appear to be indicated by it? A glance at the traditional Division of Topics, and a brief examination of it, will remove this misgiving so far as it is intelligible, and will at the same time furnish a Division which is true to the facts. The Christology of the early Greek Church was essentially a doctrine of the Person of the God-man, of the Incarnation; with this there was combined in that of the West the doctrine of His Work, of the satisfaction rendered to God for the sin of the world. Thus there arose among our early Protestant theologians, as they followed the mediaeval prototypes, the order of treatment which prevailed for a long period—first, on the Person of Christ; then, on the Work of Christ. In the first of these parts, they

developed the doctrine of the two Natures of Christ, the Divine and the Human, and of their union in the Person of the God-man (act of union, unity of the person, method of the union of the natures, communication of the properties of the one nature to the other). The work of this God-man was set forth in the doctrine of the three Offices: the Prophetic, the Priestly, and the Kingly. But this work of the God-man requires the Doctrine of the two States, that of Humiliation and that of Exaltation, to be included in the Doctrine of the Person. For the work cannot be conceived as really completed by Christ, if, when He was engaged upon it as God-man, in respect of His human nature He was possessed of the full glory of the Divine nature: for the fulfilment of the purpose referred to, He must have somehow divested Himself of that glory. This division, or to speak more precisely, the strict severance of Person and Work, and the study of the former without express reference to the latter, is not in keeping with the principle which is established in our modern conception of the process of knowledge, according to which we do not know a person apart from his work, —it is just from his work that we do know him—and therefore we cannot determine in advance what he is in himself, and then what he is found to be through his activity as directed to us. And the higher the sphere of truth which we seek to understand, the more important this principle is: we had to carry it out even in the Doctrine of the Divine Attributes. But for Christology it is of absolutely decisive significance: indeed, we were convinced that there is any such doctrine, only if it can be shown that the work of Christ is inseparable from the work of God. Then we have the fact that our Reformers expressly recognized it with regard to Christ: "to know Christ means to know the

benefits He confers" (Melanchthon). Consequently it is in what we are enabled to experience by faith as His work of salvation in us that we really know Him. Scholasticism, on the other hand, occupied itself chiefly with the mysteries of His Person, apart from those benefits that flow from Him, and so failed to know Christ in such a manner that the knowledge of Him was life eternal (John XVII. 3). As that passage already shows, the knowledge of Christ is likewise in the New Testament the knowledge of His work as Saviour; the statements which go farther serve to make this plain in its importance and its certainty. And of course it is a perfectly legitimate question whether utterances of faith, relating to the Person as knowable through His work, involve certain presuppositions and inferences which are not directly expressed in those utterances as they stand. This question is left entirely open, and the settlement of it is not anticipated in the slightest. But certainly, as we take first what lies most closely to hand, we avoid the danger of allowing faith in Christ to be obstructed by doctrines about Him which are brought forward prematurely and therefore without manifest reason, and which cannot be made clear at all to the same extent as the simpler tenets. This danger is greater than many are willing to admit, and at all events greater than that which might appear to be found along the path we adopt,—the danger that Christology may be emptied of its content; for the latter can easily be avoided, if the great problems are afterwards discussed at the proper place. By this means the misgivings are obviated which prevented Schleiermacher, in spite of the thoroughly clear knowledge he had of the correct method, from putting it in application himself. Consequently we have to distinguish between *the immediate pronouncements of faith regarding the Person of*

The Three Offices of Christ

Christ as knowable through His work, and the presuppositions or problems of Christology.

THE IMMEDIATE PRONOUNCEMENTS OF FAITH RELATING TO JESUS CHRIST: HIS PERSON AS KNOWABLE THROUGH HIS WORK

The Division of this Section presents itself to us when we recall the doctrine, already mentioned, of the *Three Offices* of Christ, as it appeared in the Dogmatics of the early Protestants; a doctrine in which a settled form was given to the intimations of the New Testament that the Prophecies of the Old Testament, pointing to the perfect King, Prophet, and Priest of the future, were fulfilled in Jesus. He is a Prophet in His conclusive Revelation of the Divine purpose of salvation, a High-Priest in His all-sufficient substitutionary fulfilment of the law in action and suffering, a King in His sovereignty over the Kingdom of Nature, Grace, and Glory. But the name "Office" itself has little appropriateness. This is true in reference to Jesus, because it does not exclude the idea of a species of activity which is separable from the Person. And it is true in reference to us, because it does not enable us to perceive clearly in what way His work is for our benefit; whereas Luther himself, in harmony with the New Testament, lays the stress on the fact that He makes us Priests and Kings. Then too the doctrine, with all its external definiteness, was vague in this respect, that it was never made quite plain whether the three Offices were entered on by Christ simultaneously or successively. If successively, this would mean that the Teaching Office was assumed in the years of His public work, that of the High-Priest in the Passion-week, and the Kingly Office after His Resurrection now that He is

with the Father. On the other hand, if the former view was justly maintained in any form, its supporters failed to exhibit all the three offices with clearness, both in the "State of Humiliation" and in that of "Exaltation," and to present them in the proper relation. There was a call, however, to do this as regards the Prophetic Office, e.g., when knowledge was referred to the Spirit of the Lord by Paul, and not only as regards the Priestly Office from the fact that Christ sat down at the right hand of God. Besides, the Prophetic Office was often viewed in a one-sided manner as having to do with instruction, in accordance with the idea of Revelation held by our old divines; and the Priestly Office was emphasized in a one-sided manner at the expense of the others, as if the whole life and work of Jesus properly existed only for the purpose of making His death possible. This one-sidedness particularly has been in a large measure accountable for the fact that the truth contained in the conception of Christ's work as High-Priest is lightly esteemed. But especially we cannot fail to see that the three Offices are not of equal value and do not run parallel to each other. To begin with, the term according to the linguistic usage in Hebrew and Greek puts the Kingly Office in the foreground; but this Office has no special content as compared with the Prophetic and High-priestly, but signifies the realization of these two in a manner which is unsurpassable. For Jesus Christ is Lord of the Kingdom of God from the simple fact that He perfectly reveals God, and brings us to God through His work which is meritorious for God. If we seek any other meaning for His Kingly work, we get a duplication of the Divine work in general which is void of significance, and indeed a serious matter for faith: a duplication of the kind was not thought of by our early writers them-

selves, with their doctrine of the Kingdom of Power; they meant by it only to emphasize the fact that Christ, as Lord of the Kingdom of God, has been taken up to share the Omnipotence of the Father, in so far as the world exists for the sake of that Kingdom. Then it is also perfectly clear that the Prophetic and Priestly Offices must not be severally assigned to different stages of the life of Jesus, but are completed in His life-work viewed as a unity. This we see when His life-work is regarded from the two points of view which have now been repeatedly mentioned, which are opposed to each other but are mutually complementary,—those, viz. which contemplate God's work as directed to us, and ours in relation to God. For speaking quite generally, and reserving all detailed qualifications, we take that as the meaning of those two expressions, Prophetic and Priestly, in their difference and in their unity. And however much this requires further explanation, it is based on the deepest reality of religion, as a process of communion between God and man which is self-devotion on God's part, and, on the ground of it, self-devotion on the part of man. This appears in fullest measure in our religion, which means communion with the God of holy love.

This criticism of the old doctrine of the Three Offices is actually suggested by the New Testament; but so too with equal certainty is the idea itself, one which supplies in this improved form an adequate summary of the whole New Testament conception of the work of Jesus. That work as a whole bears the personal impress so markedly that the idea of Office is unsuitable; and again the unity is such that the idea of Three Offices, understood as distinct, parted in time, and in their essential function existing side by side, is inadequate. But an examination of the matter in the

light of the facts leads us necessarily to the *fundamental points of view* which were just now discovered as the result of a dialectical investigation of the traditional idea. The one alternative is that we can start with His Messiahship, His Kingship, His guiding position in the Kingdom of God where He is Ruler over all. Because of the peculiarity of this Messiahship, consisting solely as it does in the realization of that communion with God which we have often had occasion to describe, which is purely spiritual and moral, but imports its actuality into other conditions of existence and indeed is fully realized only in them, it cannot be otherwise manifested than by His making this communion with God operative in a personal way. He creates trust in the love of God through the apprehension of that love on His own part by His personal trust. And this action of His naturally falls under those two points of view which were just mentioned, those of the Prophetic and the Priestly work. The other alternative is that we can start contrariwise with the content of His personal action, with the fact that He at once brings God to us and leads us to God, viz. by declaring through His personal trust that love of God by which He is governed. But this action proves to be that of a being who is great in power, and that too in a measure which is unsurpassable. Thus we are actually led by the New Testament to the conception of Prophetic action which is Kingly, and of Priestly action which is Kingly, whether we start with the matter of it as Prophetic and Priestly, or with the conclusive fulfilment of it in Kingly fashion; the traditional ideas being understood in either case in the sense indicated, not in any more external sense. There is no reason to reject them altogether, for all reflection of the deeper sort on the work of Christ leads to them. The Prophetic and Priestly

work results from the fact that there are two sides in the religious relation generally, but especially as it appears in our religion with that specialty which characterizes it. The Kingly work results because the claim to be the true religion is embodied for us in the peculiar claim of Jesus. The fact that through personal trust we are made certain of the holy love of God to us sinners, and that God is certain of this trust which we place in His love,—this communion with God in the Christian sense is realized for us through Jesus. He is therefore the Prophet of God to us and our Priest before God, God's Representative with us and ours before God, effecting God's presence with us and our presence with God; both of these too in full and for ever, and so He is our King, our Lord. A further explanation of this basal thought at the present stage would only be a weariness. To conceive it with that simplicity which in reality belongs to it, is made difficult for us by the fact that, as the further treatment will show, the whole figure of Jesus, strictly speaking, would have to be looked at from both points of view. But in the last resort that only proves the correctness of the basal thought. And if we compare what we had previously to set forth, first when the Nature of Religion was discussed, then on the Christian doctrine of God as Love, on that of the likeness of Man to God, and on that of Sin, the simple greatness not so much of any presentation as of the matter itself, or rather of this Jesus Christ, will appear with increasing plainness, *God being in Him for us, and we being in Him for God.*

This formula and the others derived from it have been called "in large measure abstract". Is this a fault, if they make plain the inexhaustible matter of the concrete figure of Jesus, in the significance it has for faith? If, however, besides this, they were found

to be "cold," we reply that Rothe in his day justly set himself against such as are "warm". A sort of test of the correctness of this simple formula, one capable of further development, descriptive of the work of Jesus, of the Person as knowable through His work,—that is, of the immediate utterances of faith relating to Jesus, —is afforded by the proof that all particular expressions by which the significance of Christ is described in the New Testament can be traced back to it in the most simple and natural way. We may only recall the circumstance that in the title Mediator, the double position relatively to God and men as co-ordinates, the prophetic and the priestly position, comes to view; and again, inasmuch as Jesus is called *the* Mediator, that it is asserted that He is not to be compared with others. For the rest, we may simply point to the wealth of titles, purposely stated without regard to order, as to the whole of which our assertion holds true in some form. He is called Captain (being pioneer, champion), Servant, Apostle, Intercessor, Physician, Head, Lord; Paschal-, Covenant-, Atoning-Sacrifice; Light, Truth, Way, Life; Vine, Bread, Door, Corner-Stone, and Foundation. The numerous titles are at the same time both a warning, when we are dealing with the precise dogmatic formulæ, to be constantly mindful of the inexhaustible nature of the religious experiences which form their foundation, and also, from their indefiniteness, a summons to shape such formulæ of the more precise type. Then we have the broad fact that the recollection of the wealth of New Testament expressions which furnish language descriptive of the inexhaustible impression produced by the work of Jesus as it lies open to our experience, leads us here, at the close of our study of the question of method, to emphasize as strongly as possible a principle which, it is to be hoped, was sufficiently

brought out in a provisional way by that study, and will always be confirmed more fully as the inquiry proceeds. That is the fact which is surely undeniable, that at an early period the reflection prevalent in the Church on Christology ceased to follow straight the guiding clue supplied by the testimony of Jesus regarding Himself, and if we take only a wide, general view, by the testimony of the Church in the earliest period. According to what we there find, Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Lord, i.e. the bringer of the Kingdom of God, who, in the name of God, establishes the sovereign sway of God, contends and triumphs, judges and saves (cf. among other works Schlatter's "New Testament Theology"). It is impossible in passing in Dogmatics to prove the guiding conception we speak of from the particular statements in the New Testament; for this purpose these, looked at by themselves, are much too varied. But the guiding conception itself is independent of them. And its importance can hardly be overestimated. The non-observance of the Old Testament roots of faith in Jesus as "Christ" and "Lord" led the speculation of the Church, under well-known conditions, farther and farther into the labyrinth of insoluble problems; and even in modern times, recently indeed in connexion with movements of ecclesiastical politics, these are put in the foreground, though not, we must admit, as formerly in the sphere of life and work, but where there is a dispute about the right form of faith. This is largely intelligible from the emptiness which is held to characterize the account we have, on the other hand, in the New Testament, regarding the faith of the Church in the earliest period. In such a position of matters, a deliberate application of the guiding conception referred to is necessary and promising in Dogmatics—necessary for the truth's sake, and promising for the same reason.

Faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God

New Testament research goes on its way victoriously, though it seems to be aimless if we look only at particular discoveries and essays. That is, to name only one example which we may apply to the work in Christology which lies before us: If Jesus meant that He was the Christ—and what else can be said, unless we want to make all that is reported of Him unintelligible? the Christ of course who belongs to the Kingdom announced by Him—He is for our faith inseparably united with God; and yet by no means necessarily in the sense of speculation with regard to the relation of God the Father to God the Son. At all events the question of His position as towards God arises at a totally different point and in a totally different manner, if we start with His nature as knowable through His work, from what we find if we start with His "Nature" in the sense of the early Catholic Church in its first days.

Owing to these considerations we have therefore to distinguish the *Prophetic* and the *Priestly* work of Jesus; i.e. His work, though it forms a unity, has to be looked at, as regards its content, from the two points of view thus indicated. First, as the personal embodiment *of the love of the Father, which is actively present in Him the Son,* a love which He Himself appropriates by His personal trust, Jesus *acts on us in such a manner that in His working we can trustfully apprehend the love of the Father. God in Him for us and through Him in us,—such is His significance for us.* Next,—as the personal embodiment of the love of the Father, which is actively present in Him the Son, *a love which He Himself appropriates by His personal trust,* Jesus *works in such wise in relation to God that, for God, His (God's) action relatively to us is fraught with effect through this work of love manifested by the Son. He for us in God, and we through Him for God,—such is His significance for God.*

In this statement, which is identical in the two cases, the emphasis falls on different elements of it. However, if we represented the work of Jesus as having only this twofold significance as respects the content of it, a question which is of importance for the faith would not yet be answered in a manner which is free from ambiguity. True, there would be no doubt that His work had the unalterable significance which has been stated; in this sense therefore His Prophetic and Priestly work might well be called Kingly. But whether only in the form of a fact of history which continues to be operative because of its importance, or in the form of continuing personal action in the strict sense of the expression—this would not yet be decided. In order that perfect clearness may be attained on this matter, we make a distinction, in the presentation given above of the work of Jesus, between its *content* (its character as *Prophetic* and *Priestly*, understood as Kingly in each of these aspects) and its *form;* and we speak of the latter, since we are now emphasizing this particular aspect of the truth, under the title of the *kingly* prophetic and priestly work, viewed as *kingly*.

It is impossible without wearisome repetitions to recall the *historical matter* which is here utilized in its significance for faith, in the several sections to which it applies in common. In general we can only bring forward some leading points which elucidate the guiding conception which was dealt with above; and with respect to the trustworthiness of this history, the previous account of the matter (p. 216 ff.) must likewise be presupposed. But for those points of view which have been discussed, and which are of fundamental importance for Dogmatics, the expression "Prophetic" and "Priestly" is often used in what follows, for the sake of shortness, of course only in the strict sense which has been de-

scribed. In particular, the word Revelation, which has been avoided till this point in the subject of Christology, but for which we previously gave a paraphrase (pp. 199ff.) may now be employed for the sake of simplicity, to show how the love of God becomes operative in the work of Jesus. The misunderstanding according to which there was only a communication of saving truths in Revelation, or at least only some sort of presupposition for the reception of salvation, not the actual gift of God Himself, has been obviated with sufficient frequency; the more definite expression, Revelation as operative for salvation, as God's active love, explains itself from time to time as it appears.

But it still requires to be mentioned that for the reality of that fellowship with God which was experienced by Jesus, which works its effect on us and is likewise meritorious in the sight of God, for the reality of the converse between Father and Son in love, there is *no expression which is generally recognized.* Following the fourth Gospel, we may speak with Schleiermacher of the Father being in the Son and the Son in the Father. Only we must bear in mind that this community of being is viewed wholly and solely as manifested in action (cf. John v. 17, 19), and that the action is the highest kind of all, that of love and trust; just as the New Testament speaks with simple impressiveness of mutual knowing, willing, working, loving, as between God and Jesus, Father and Son. Indeed the simplest expression, "working," if the word used by John is understood as a comprehensive expression for the whole synoptic view, is for that reason perhaps the best. The circumstance that in that case the "being" has not full justice done to it, would be an objection which has no foundation either in the religious life or in a clear theory of knowledge. This will have to be

brought out with increasing definiteness in the treatment of the subject which follows, and the fact will have to be set forth in the simplest possible conceptions.

The Person of Jesus as God's Revelation of Himself for us, and as our Representative Before God

The Prophetic and Priestly Work of Jesus in Kingly Form

The Person of Jesus Christ as a Revelation of the Love of God

His Prophetic Work in Kingly Form

Through His work of love as applying to us, a work based on His personal trust by which He apprehends in personal fashion the love of the Father which is directed to Him as the Son, Jesus acts on us in such wise that in His work we experience by faith the active love of the Father as the principal reality. God in Him for us and through Him in us—that is the significance He has for us. Our task consists in the elucidation of this article of faith, one which is of decisive import and inexhaustible in its simplicity. We have to show *in how far* Jesus so acts upon us in this work of His that, provided we have trust, we experience in Him the work of God; and therefore we have to show the particular aspects of this fruitful work, in their difference and in their unity. The answer can be no other than that which was previously given; only it had then to be made plain from the particular standpoint of Apologetics (cf. pp. 199 ff., 582). It is: Jesus

acts on us *through His life-work which forms a unity, through it as being the perfect realization of His consciousness of His Vocation, inseparably combined as this is with His Self-consciousness.*

There is an objection which might nullify this presentation of the matter, if it is not removed in advance. It is said to be too simple for the greatness of the subject: what we really want to understand is, how the holy love of God for sinful humanity becomes an indubitable reality. Examined more closely, this objection will resolve itself into two. It is asserted that our formula, strictly regarded, does not really give expression to a work of God in Christ for our salvation, and that, if it does, it does not express a work of God which is so mysterious as that which faith experiences. It is held that, properly speaking, there is not a *work* of God, that in truth we merely allow ourselves to be roused by the communion with God which is visualized in Christ and is designed for all of us, and which, being exhibited in Him with special effectiveness, encourages us to imitate Him, and in a certain measure draws us into the same spirit,—but just as the more highly developed spiritual life raises the lower; and of course one may regard such quickening of the self by Christ as God's work, so far as God is present and working in all life, especially in all religious life. Against this objection our formula is secured, if only it is taken strictly as it stands. It is not satisfied with saying that the love of God which is observed in Jesus as specially effective invites us to imitation, although in us the power is less and the measure smaller, and that it draws us to itself. This is not what is meant, when the greatest emphasis was laid, as it always was in the foregoing, on the trust which Jesus manifests, on His devotion to the love of God. That had not the signifi-

cance assigned to it of being a typical presentment of the trust which should be ours. Of course it is this also; indeed we would not know what genuine communion with God is, if we did not find it in Him. But it is much more. His faith, as He lays open His soul to the love of God, is viewed in the present connexion as a means for the purpose of bringing the love of God in Him to bear upon us, and making it effective, of having the love of God revealed to us by Him. Now that would not be the case, unless He Himself were to assert the love of God by the trust He manifested: the love of God would not be real, and therefore not operative for us, without this personal devotion of Jesus to God. But if, after all, it should be held that *perfect Divinity*, so to say, is missed in this action, that too rests on a misunderstanding. It is what is intelligible to us that science in all its branches has to apprehend, including the science of faith, and on this head as well as others. Action itself is a mystery in all cases; doubly mysterious is God's action on finite minds, and most of all in the religious relation. This last great mystery we have always emphasized; moreover we have certainly rejoiced on all occasions that it is the one great mystery, not one among many. But what we understand is that which was mentioned above; and if God's action is simple, not striking, it is just by that quality that it furnishes the surest indication of its being Divine. Besides, the question is of course still in reserve, whether there are presuppositions or inferences implied by this immediate pronouncement of faith, which involve Christ still more deeply in the mystery of God; and so also in the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the conception of the work of the Divine Spirit will have to be further discussed.

Thus we have to realize to ourselves how far God

works effectually upon us in the work of Jesus, or produces faith in His love; i.e. in the work of Jesus as itself a personal affirmation of the work of God in Him. For only thus is there in our experience a personal work,—and, as has been shown, that is the same as saying any characteristic work at all,—of this God whose nature is holy love, and who desires to enter into personal communion with us in love. The fact that personal working requires to be conceived in all cases as continuous and as forming a unity and as peculiar to the individual, and that such work is described by the idea of a VOCATION, has to be shown by Ethics (pp. 209 ff.). That in the application of this idea to the work of Jesus, all the factors of it seem to be intensified in a manner which is unique, but that nevertheless no other idea which is clearer is available for us, and that Jesus Himself leads us to make use of it—this requires no further proof after all that was previously set forth (cf. also pp. 199 ff.). THE MEANS FOR THIS WORK OF JESUS IN HIS VOCATION, are, in the formal aspect, the same as for personal working in a vocation in general, namely speech and action; the action, we observe, forming a unity with suffering. It is understood as a matter of course that speech and action must coincide more closely, the more important one's work is; and that real suffering is the loftiest species of achievement. Now this is wholly the impression produced by the Figure of Jesus in the Gospels. Not only does He testify "with authority" of the sovereignty of God, which is that of the Father who draws sinners as His sons into union with Himself and with each other, forgiving their sins and bestowing His Spirit; but He loves the sinners, forgives them, trains them up in the way which, as He declares, is characteristic of the Father's love. He works upon them, as He says, in

order that the Father may work; He acts as the shepherd does in the case of the lost, or the physician in the case of the sick. In particular, we observe in His action the strictest judgment upon sin, and also compassionate grace; these being united in the same manner in which, as He proclaims, they are manifested by the Father in heaven, the God who alone is good. And all this, as has been emphasized from the first, in the sense of a communion with God such as proves itself supramundane, not merely in respect of its preciousness, but also in respect of its duration and the conditions of its existence. Now this speech and action, as they appear in indissoluble union, meet with the opposition of antagonistic wills, first in the special position of Jesus, and so in the great Kingdom of sin in which He found Himself,—in the "World" (pp. 440 ff.)—and they turn to suffering. This suffering, which is the greatest that exists, that, viz. of rejected love, He transforms into the active manifestation of the highest love, even unto death: His will, which chooses to do nothing but what the Father wills, becomes the will to suffer, because the Father wills this. Without this highest conceivable proof of love, His love would not be the highest kind, such as He declares the Father's to be, Who is not turned from His love by the opposition of the lost son, but makes the opposition the means for the triumph of love. On the other hand, such love unto death would be unreal and incomprehensible, without the preceding love-suit of the life which is made perfect in this death. Thus we understand how He Himself conceives and describes His suffering as a Divine necessity, and His devotion of His life as the culmination of His service (Mat. xx. 28). And His Church has discovered in this conception of His the foundation of her existence, in His death the perfecting of His love, and therein of the

love of the Father for sinners (Rom. v. 1 ff.; 2 Cor. v. 13 ff.). The unity mentioned above of earnestness and gentleness, applies once more to this perfect work of love: the Cross is the seal on the condemnation of sin, just as it is the seal of Divine grace. The last thought we are accustomed to see treated, for the most part, only from that other point of view, according to which Christ is the priestly representative of humanity before God. But a self-consistent theory of the work of Christ for our salvation must both start from and end with the supreme principle here under consideration, according to which in Christ's work it is God's holy love that acts upon us; and it is in this direction that the pronouncements of the Church in the first age expressly point.

The work of Christ viewed as a whole naturally requires to be traced back to the DEPTHS OF HIS CONSCIOUSNESS (pp. 199 ff.). First of all there comes here His consciousness of His vocation. That work of His, constituting as it does a unity, would be unintelligible to us without such a source, itself constituting a unity. Jesus Himself speaks in the simplest language of this unique vocation: He knows He is sent, is come, for the particular purpose, or He finishes the work which the Father gave Him. Now certainty as to one's vocation always reaches down to the mysterious ground of one's innermost feeling, and goes deeper, the higher one's vocation is. But when the task is the incomparable one of working on men in such wise, that they can discover in this action the holy love of God in operation, the unity of the *consciousness of one's vocation and of self-consciousness* must also be incomparable. Hence in the case of Jesus, we cannot speak of these two in separation from each other; the latter necessarily impels to the former, and the former without the latter is mean-

ingless, indeed godless. Jesus knows that the love of the Father is bestowed on Him as the Son, in a manner in which no other receives it. But thus it is that He knows His vocation is that of leading others to the Father,—otherwise He would not be loved by this God who is love. The two modes of consciousness do not so completely coincide in the case of any other person. In His case, His knowing, willing, and feeling are wholly filled by this twofold certainty which is also a unity: this unity of consciousness, which tells Him that He is loved by the Father as the well-beloved Son, and that as such He has to bring others into communion with the Father, has to make them sons of this Father,—in short this consciousness of being Son and Saviour—is the peculiar content of His consciousness. So completely is this the case that it can never be said of Him as of others, "The word of the Lord came unto me," not even at the culminating periods, or indeed the turning-points, of His consciousness, characterized as it undoubtedly was by development. But it would not really be personal self-consciousness, unless the Father's work of love in Him were affirmed and responded to by His trust and His love. Otherwise it would remain an unreal, therefore also an inconceivable, and so an ineffectual, phenomenon in this world, a fictitious display, not a reality. What was emphasized in advance above (pp. 594 ff.), becomes always more obvious here: our religious trust can only be directed to Jesus, He can only become the object of our trust, if He Himself apprehends the love of God by personal trust. God has found this personal communion between Himself and a human life, only if the personal human will inclines itself to the active will of God—itself wills because God wills.

How we may express this in particular instances is

a matter of secondary significance. It has been finely observed (W. Herrmann, Schlatter) that in the Gospel story, there is no express mention of the faith of Jesus, but that the humility of Jesus is plainly asserted by Himself and by the first witnesses. Not as if it would be untrue, or would show a want of religious insight, to speak of His faith : to the Church, it was rather self-evident at an early period that she should regard Him as the pioneer of faith (Heb. xii. 1 ff.), who, thoroughly full of faith Himself, works faith in others ; and we have just now pointed expressly to the essential ground for this fact, one which only superficial faith can fail to note, one which causes joy only to the unbelief that remarks with a sneer, that one who has faith himself cannot be the object of faith. But in the word Humility, strictly understood, His faith is implied, in the precise relation which is the most important for His faith in the significance it has for us. His human will is devoted without demur, and in action which is most truly personal, to the Divine will which is operative in Him : on this all depends, when we speak of perfect communion between God and man becoming a reality. Now it is just this that is implied, when the humility of Jesus is emphasized—not the sense of guilt or of weakness, and no ascetic self-denial. He, the Son, who is loved by the Father in a manner which is unique, desires to be so loved while His own will is active, entirely free, devoted, submissive ; while He knows the unique glory of that "spirit of service," which shrinks with trembling from pride, as the one sin which is dangerous to Him. And in connexion with this comes, as a matter of course, the recollection that, in this consciousness of self and of His vocation, there is involved an attitude towards sin and sinners, which is absolutely determinate. Jesus knows Himself to be loved as the

Son by the God who alone is good, and turns to this God with active will: He would deny His Father and Himself, if He did not abjure sin, as sin, in others as in Himself; i.e. if He would have the Father's love be granted to those others who are sinners, otherwise than as a love that both forgives sin and also judges it while forgiving. The combination of earnestness and gentleness in His work which we spoke of, extends to the roots of His filial consciousness; and this applies to His work as a whole.

The unity of the filial consciousness of Jesus and of His consciousness of His vocation, finds characteristic expression in His witness of Himself, viz. in the circumstance that, of the two descriptive phrases for it which are of most importance, the one, Son of Man, refers in the main to the vocation, the other, Son of God, in the main to the deepest self-consciousness; while each of the two likewise designates the content of the other. If the philologists are right in holding that *Son of Man* signifies Man, the expression as used by Jesus must have a special sense. Either He is described by it as the unique, ideal Man in the moral sphere, and this is certainly not an interpretation which can be proved from Holy Scripture; or as the Messiah who appears in Daniel VII., the connexion being formed perhaps by intermediate links which are unknown to us. Now if this latter view alone has to be seriously considered, it was certainly not the Church that first applied the expression to Jesus (in fact it is used virtually in the Gospels alone), but it was preferred by Jesus Himself, because it least favoured the national hopes and could yet include the loftiest claims, and therefore is found in connexion with statements of opposite significance. The Son of Man is without home and is the servant of servants, but He is servant in a cause in

which no one else can help others, and He is glorified as no one else is, when He comes in the clouds of heaven (Mark VIII. 38; X. 45). The expression unites the contrasted senses of expectation and reality, of external appearance and inward nature, of present and future, and it is a question whether we may add past and present. But when His glory is called a glory of the Father (Mat. XVI. 27), it is plain how the vocation of the Son of Man rests on the ground of His filial consciousness as the Son of God.

This *filial consciousness* too has its roots in the Old Testament. The name of the people of God, of their representative, of the theocratic King, of the perfect King of the future, is the Son of God, chosen of God in love, who is acquainted with the counsel of God, and equipped, bound, ready to carry it out. Whatever may be the Semitic presuppositions and the Israelitish peculiarities in the case, the decisive point is the way in which the God who is called Father is experienced and conceived. Now if Jesus calls all who are overmastered by the fact of God's sovereignty sons, because the King of the Divine dominion which He ushers in is the Father in heaven; if He in essence destroys the national exclusiveness, and promises that all who hunger after righteousness will be filled, it is only the more significant that He calls God His Father, and Himself the Son. We are by no means concerned in this matter with the particular statements, as particular, but with the powerful impression produced by His whole bearing towards others; from whom, by the very fact of His giving them all, He distinguishes Himself as the Giver, and whom He excels in His inmost nature while He is in closest contact with them, being more satisfying the more natural He is. Thus Matthew XI. 25 ff. is only the plainest interpretation of a fact which everywhere

presses itself on our attention. And if the reading is preferred—"No one has known the Father but the Son, and no one has known the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Son is willing to reveal it," it is a great question whether in this reading the "less," as it is supposed to be, is not in truth a measure which amounts to "still more". However, be that as it may, the main point is clear and sufficient. The Father's knowledge appertains to Him, the Son. What that means in the mouth of a pious Israelite who lived in the atmosphere of the Old Testament, we are apt to recall with too little distinctness to our minds. He knows the God of whom an Isaiah says—"Who hath known the mind of the Lord?" and He calls Him His Father, and Himself the Son. The Divine Personality, He of whom the prophets speak with trembling, has found a human personality to whom alone He is completely revealed; and therefore also this other human personality is thoroughly known to no one but the Father. In the qualitative sense, this is more than what we observe when great men are not understood by the multitude; and this because such knowledge of the Son by the Father corresponds to the knowledge of the Father which is possessed by the Son. But inasmuch as Jesus knows that all things are delivered to Him as this Son, the perception of the mystery of His personality becomes for us the perception of His unique vocation; just as for Himself, the latter is grounded on the possession in question.

Our admission of the main points which are of decisive moment in the whole of this matter, those points which were associated here with the phrases Son of Man and Son of God, is not dependent on the particular expressions just used. But it would doubtless be much more generally adhered to, if there was a more general understanding of the connexion between the witness of

Jesus to Himself and the Old Testament. From this point of view, the principal matter of importance may perhaps be further expressed thus: Jesus combines statements like that in Isaiah LXI. with Daniel VII. according to their inner sense (Kattenbusch); and we do not do justice to the records, if the one pronouncement is put forward as if it were opposed to the other. The matter which is of decisive moment has recently been brought out with special clearness and emphasis by an inquiry into the declaration, "I am come"—viz. the certainty with regard to the vocation as being that of "saving" and "fulfilling the law," and that too in such wise that both these purposes are combined as respects their content in the idea of serving in love, and as regards their form make the claim that the work to be done in the case is "final" (A. Harnack). If this final aspect is emphasized as expressly as is done with good reason here, especially as exhibiting a fulfilment of what is said in the Old Testament with regard to the saving by Jahve, we have here the historical foundation thoroughly established which is necessary but also sufficient for the dogmatic positions that were stated above; and it is in truth a dispute about words when we ask what has to be said about the "Messianic consciousness" of Jesus, and whether or not a "Christology" is supposed to be found in the positions in question.

We started above with the consideration of the way in which He carries out this special work of His which was committed to Him as the Son. Now that it has been traced back to its deepest source, we still require to note expressly in what sense it is a perfect work. The old Christology treated this question under the heading of the SINLESSNESS of Jesus. There is doubtless something indistinct about the word, from the

mere fact that it only denies that there was sin in Jesus, and does not state positively what His perfection consists in. It is therefore quite intelligible that people should have preferred to speak in the first instance of His absolute *fidelity to His vocation.* The unity we referred to in speech, action and suffering, the unity which characterizes the work of Jesus, supported as it is by His consciousness that He is bound so to act, and is able so to act, as the Son of His Father, is what constitutes His perfect fidelity to His vocation, and so too the concurrence of His vocation and His Personality, whereby He is distinguished above all others and makes the love of God operative. Moreover, many New Testament expressions which are quoted as evidence of His sinlessness, point to the specific features of this perfect faithfulness which He showed in His calling—to His patient suffering (1 Pet. II. 21), to His obedience unto death (Phil. II. 1 ff.), to the whole manifestation made in Him (1 John III. 5), and to the fact that He knew no sin (2 Cor. v. 21).

Nevertheless, the expression *Sinlessness* has also a permanent justification, along side of that of His perfect fidelity in His vocation. For it involves certain conclusions, not recognized without reservation by all who speak of fidelity to His vocation, namely with regard to the inner, hidden aspect of His work, and with regard to the period of His growth before His public work. Now on both points the conclusion is inevitable, if we realize quite clearly what kind of vocation we have here to do with—that of bringing God to men, to sinful men; of working in such wise, that God's gracious work becomes for them a reality. In what may be described as a civil calling, one may be faithful without purity in one's inmost being; but not in the other, unless there is undisturbed communion with the Father,

even in the hidden depths of the heart. Jesus certainly does not seek to be only an example for men in their struggle to be like Him. For this a Paul, with his experience of mercy, is more suited in his way. He rather seeks to stand on God's side as Mediator of the Divine love for sinners, in actual human circumstances such as awaken confidence. Only as the Sinless One is He adapted for this. Otherwise He must leave too much to the men themselves who are attracted by Him, viz. the very thing which they seek in Him, and for which they do not find power in themselves. And from this point of view, we see that the other question, as to the quiet period of growth which lies in advance of His public work, cannot be set aside.

As regards both points, the question of *historical reality* emerges as a natural one here, and with special urgency. Now no other life has been investigated with such painstaking care in detail as this one, both by the eye of love, and also with the secret wish that it might, after all, prove to be but a shadow. However, the apparent animosity against foes (as in Mat. XII. 34), and the apparent severity towards those most nearly related (as in Mat. XII. 48), need no excuse, but require to be understood as morally necessary pronouncements, at such moments of a life such as His was; the holy wrath, in the former case, as the necessary antithesis of perfect love, as the earthly revelation of eternal, holy love, and the apparent want of affection for kindred as a realization of His own saying in Luke XIV. 26. Certainly each of them is only intelligible, if the supramundane character of the Kingdom of God and of His righteousness is frankly recognized, if an ideal of humanity which He Himself did not recognize is not taken as the standard. But in the retrospect of His hidden *life in youth*, even opponents have acknowledged

that they can discover no trace of scars in His conscience (Strauss); and those who are distinguished for their knowledge of human nature declare that it would be a complete puzzle if He contrasted Himself with others as sinners, as He undoubtedly does, without having a memory which was unstained. We may add, that His attitude would be still more inconceivable as towards the "righteous," whose righteousness He by no means recognizes only in ironical fashion, and whom He treats nevertheless as those who are furthest from His Kingdom, because they know nothing of His humility before God, and therefore of true righteousness. He would stand far below them, however, if He measured Himself by this highest rule, and were conscious of an inner contradiction. As against the whole impression thus produced, even Mark x. 17 ff. cannot be brought forward with effect.' On the contrary, His "follow me," and the prospect of perfection through such imitation, shows how thoroughly He knows that He is the beloved Son of the God who alone is good, becoming on earth what the Father is eternally, but not being disobedient at any moment to the will of the Father, as it is now known and capable of being fulfilled. Nor can it be upheld in the long run, that He associated Himself with others in putting up the prayer for forgiveness. However, the tone of those assertions shows how clearly we must bear in mind what was set forth in our Apologetics regarding the probability of the history and the certainty of faith, not so as to get faith out of a difficulty, but with the view of exhibiting its proper nature.

A similar account has to be given of the attitude we assume towards the Resurrection of Jesus. The reason why His work, if it ends on the Cross, is not of such a kind that in it we can trustfully apprehend

God's work, has likewise been set forth under Apologetics, although only from the special point of view which is there recognized; and at that stage we also defined the measure of trustworthiness in the reports which is indispensable for faith, but is also in reality supplied by the history (pp. 209 ff., 216 ff.).

Here we may only add one other matter: the clearness of those reports is greater as regards the fact of the new life of Jesus and the Revelation in it than as regards the mode. Among those who believe in Jesus, which means however in the living Christ, there are differences of opinion, not as to the fact of His life after death, but as to the mode of the transition, as to the connexion of His glorified life with the body that was laid in the grave, whether a real relation between the former and the latter has to be assumed or not. If this difference is carried out with the unqualified regard for truth which the great subject demands, honourable adversaries will be brought more closely together by the matter before them, than they themselves are often aware. For those who adhere to the idea of appearances mean by them unreservedly appearances, self-manifestations, of the Lord who is really alive, exalted to the invisible world which is the most real of all, exalted to perfect communion with God. The others who lay stress on some sort of connexion between the "glorious body" and that which was buried, cannot be blind to the fact that it is the glorified Lord who appears here, in a world not glorified; in other words, that there is no resumption of the former intercourse, but a confirmation of real intercourse with the Lord who has entered into the glory of the Father. This is plainly enough affirmed by the New Testament witnesses (Phil. III. 21; 1 Cor. XV. 50), and it was also asserted by our early theologians, often with more

clearness than we find in many of the most recent discussions; however remote from their mode of thinking may be our way of putting the question, necessitated as it is by historical investigation and by the change in philosophy. The description given of the difference and the unity in the declarations of faith as to the "mode" of occurrence which was spoken of, will suffice, and will at the same time implicitly mark the truth and the error in the expressions "subjective" and "objective" vision, or "bodily Resurrection," expressions often used with no precision. The obscurity is due to the circumstance that between the questions of fact and of mode, a clear distinction is not always made. What is absolutely excluded for faith is a "subjective" vision, not only in the sense of mere imagination, but also in that of an occurrence which is psychologically necessary on the supposition of a theory of the world which asserts pure Immanence. On such a view the fact would be denied. If this supposition is deliberately abandoned, and one speaks of an "objective vision," then a vision which has an objective basis would at all events be more intelligible. But in that case Christian thought is led to the matter we spoke of relating to the "mode"; and for that, an expression which is as simple as possible was sought for above.

These are the essential marks of the Prophetic work of Jesus in its Kingly form; or, since His Person can be known by us through that work, these are the principal traits in the figure of the Person of Jesus Christ as the *kingly Prophet*, i.e. *as the highest personal Revelation of God, of holy love.* Through the effective presence of the love of the Father in Him, which He avows by His personal trust, He operates in such wise on us that, if there is trust on our part, we can appre-

hend in His action the love of God. In Him God exists for us and through Him God is in us—such is His significance for us. We have faith therefore in Him, just because the trust in God which is associated with the Christian salvation, is inseparable from trust in Him. This may be a dry form of words, but it represents the experience of real faith. For the important point is that God, this God of holy love, really enters into communion with us, produces trust in us. Now He does this when Jesus works upon us in the way which has been indicated. For His Church therefore Jesus is a Prophet, if we go back to the deepest meaning of that word as it has been explained, and moreover He is *the* Prophet who crowns the order, after whom we look for no other: in so far He is the Prophet of Kingly rank. The numerous and grateful acknowledgments of faith, including those which are most comprehensive in their range, and indicative of the deepest feeling, express that simple but crucial thought. To take the acknowledgments of the New Testament—"Life has been manifested"; "we beheld His glory"; "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet enemies, Christ died for us"; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself"; "the love of Christ constraineth us". So also the Church Hymns relating to Christmas and the Passion—"The Eternal Light has come to earth"; "Grant me, O God of mercy, the vision of Thy grace"; "Jesus is my confidence, my Saviour here on earth".

How we are Represented before God

The Priestly Work of Jesus in its Kingly Form

Can this Prophetic work of Jesus in Kingly form, the work which is God's self-manifestation, be viewed

further as constituting a representation of us before God, as Priestly work in Kingly form? Is He our Representative before God; does He work in our behalf in relation to God, in the same way in which we have viewed Him, up to this point, as God's Representative among men through His work as directed to us from the side of God? We have now to deal with the other proposition which was stated in advance: JESUS, BEING UNITED TO THE FATHER, THROUGH HIS PERSONAL TRUST IN THE LOVE BESTOWED UPON HIM AS THE SON, ACTS IN RELATION TO GOD, THROUGH HIS WORK OF LOVE FOR US,—A WORK BASED ON THAT TRUST,—IN SUCH WISE THAT, AS GOD RECOGNIZES THIS WORK OF LOVE FOR US ACCOMPLISHED BY THE SON, HIS (GOD'S) WORK IN US IS FOUND BY HIM TO BE EFFECTUAL. Jesus appears for us in presence of God, and God sees us in Him—such is the significance of Jesus for God. At the same time the expressions, "relation to God," "for God," "in the judgment of God," all require to be defined with the greatest precision; but they are indispensable in advance, as serving on the whole to promote clearness of view.

What is the more precise meaning which this proposition has to convey? In the traditional Christology, the Priestly work of Christ is often put in the principal place. What Christ accomplished in our behalf before God, is regarded as more important than the fact that He brings God to us. Or to speak more precisely, it often seems in the doctrine as if the whole emphasis lay on the function which Christ exercised as High-priest. Then in the actual experience of Christians, the tacit addition is made that, as this High-priest is sent by God, He brings all blessing to us in the name of God; as indeed the Old Testament High-priest himself, e.g. does not merely go into the Holy Place to

make atonement for the people, but also comes forth from it as the bringer of the grace of God to the people. At all events, it is necessary here again to remember from the outset that, in the last resort, in all religion everything depends on the gift of God, that therefore the discussion of the present topic, however important, will somehow come within the framework of the previous matter; as the leading utterances of the New Testament themselves clearly testify (e.g. John III. 16; 2 Cor. v. 19).

Historical and Critical

A common understanding on this point is possible, only if the doctrine of the early Protestant theologians is clearly realized and estimated as respects its principles. For that doctrine, although it is not even known in its distinctive form, is yet regarded by a countless number of people as the unassailable truth. But in order to understand it, we get valuable aid if we first establish certain POINTS OF VIEW, which are necessarily presented when we speak of the Priestly work of Christ; although a definite statement of them is got only from what follows. The priest brings others by some means into communion with God, opens up for them the way of approach to God: himself taken from among those for whom he is to perform that service, seeing that he must put himself in their position, must be able to sympathize with them, he nevertheless of necessity at the same time stands in a specific relation above them, through the call and qualification he receives from God for that service. This is implied in the idea of the Mediator between God and man, here and now conceived as Mediator as one looks from below upwards. In more precise terms, we have an action of

the priest, to the end that those who commit themselves to his care may have favour with God: he does something which is of value before God, something which he makes valid for the benefit of others, and which God recognizes. In this definite sense, the priest is a representative before God. There is a want of precision when the idea of intervention is generalized in such a way that it only means, in a wide sense, taking trouble for the benefit of another; no explicit thought of God being introduced, in Whose judgment this trouble comes to be of advantage to those for whom it is taken. In particular, the double sense of the German word for sacrifice (*Opfer*) is often accountable for this inexact conception. What we came to know above as the work of Jesus, in which God's work becomes conceivable to our faith, was really the greatest imaginable sacrifice on the part of Jesus, in the sense of the truest personal devotion; but whether it is a sacrifice to God, a work which is of value in any way for God, is not at all decided yet by that fact. If therefore the precise idea of the priestly work is that which was mentioned above, we will always have to consider three points of view—whether and in what way the idea of an interposition before God in our behalf is based on the Christian idea of God; whether and in what way Christ can be the one who thus interposes before God; whether and in what way His interposition comes to be of advantage to us. These are naturally the same points of view which we met with before, when dealing with one set of the most important answers found in history to the basal question, what it means to believe in Christ; only they now come before us with more definiteness.

As regards the *first* point of view, the answer of the EARLY PROTESTANT DOGMATICS to the question of the

significance of Christ as High-priest, is briefly as follows. God who is eternal love and righteousness in one (pp. 357, 495 ff.), destines humanity for eternal life, in such wise that He promises eternal life as reward for the fulfilment of the supreme law which He, the sovereign Lawgiver, lays down ; while the transgression of it entails the penalty of eternal damnation. Consequently He, the just Judge, has condemned the whole race on account of the sin of the first man. His love, however, seeks an adjustment between itself and His righteousness. Guilty humanity cannot supply help to itself. But if it is to be saved through one who interposes in its behalf, it is not enough that he should endure the penalty appointed for it. Humanity is under obligation to fulfil the law, if it is to obtain eternal life, and as being sinful it is unable to do so : for this purpose too the Substitute must be introduced. Then as to the *second* point of view—how does Christ interpose in the interest of humanity? For this He is qualified as the God-man. As man He "ought to," as God He "can," fulfil the requirements in question. He suffers the penalty and He fulfils the law in our stead : He can satisfy even the latter requirement, for as God He is Lord over the law, not subject to it. He completes this work, which is a unity though it presents two sides, by what He does and by what He suffers, by His active and passive obedience. Finally, there is the *third* point of view—the satisfaction rendered to God's righteousness, as Christ's merit is transferred to us by God, on condition of our having faith.

There is scarcely any dogma in regard to which we have to distinguish so carefully as with this one, between its purpose and the actual formulation of it. Its purpose is justified at the tribunal of personal Christian experience. The question of the Heidelberg Catechism,

so rich in historical significance—"What is your sole consolation in life and in death?" expressly represents, in the answer which is given, the consolation that one belongs to Jesus Christ as having its certainty based on the fact, that He made full payment for all sins; and many Catechisms in which the matter is expounded actually point to the twofold obedience of Christ. Equally undeniable is the fact that scarcely one of the countless number who see their sole consolation in the death of Christ, is willing to subscribe to the individual details of the doctrine in question. But a common understanding is rendered difficult, because innumerable people feel that a criticism of the doctrine is an attack upon their faith.

It serves to promote such an understanding, when we make a strict distinction between the judgment we form as to *the logical consistency of that doctrine itself*, the fundamental presuppositions being acknowledged, and the judgment we pronounce on that presupposition which is contained in the first of the sections mentioned. Granting therefore that the basal conception of God and His relation to men exactly represents the Gospel teaching, we cannot after all blind ourselves to the fact, that forthwith a difficulty, which is by no means only imaginary, arises in connexion with the *first* of those points of view which were distinguished above. For the commandment of love to God and to one's neighbour, which was given to the first man, a commandment for which the particular prohibition in Paradise serves only as an illustration, holds no distinct place in the legal relation between God and man which is presupposed. Love can only be required, if love has gone before,—i.e. however, under any circumstances, only in a moral, not in a legal, relationship. Luther and Calvin had actually spoken of that; but among the writers on

Dogmatics, the thought of God as a Lawgiver, resembling the head of a state, gained more and more the preponderance. And then, if He is likewise thought of as Judge, the question is raised anew whether eternal damnation, and further that of all posterity, for the one sin of the progenitor of the race, is a just judgment. So too it is asked whether the assumption that a penalty can be expiated by any other than the guilty person, is one which is justified. In order to understand these difficulties, one only requires to place oneself strictly at the point of view which has really been adopted. For it is a totally different question, whether the rejection of God's love does not entail exclusion from that love on moral grounds which are indisputable; and likewise whether the righteous person cannot suffer in behalf of the unrighteous, in a moral community. But with respect to the interposition of Christ,—the *second* of the points of view previously mentioned,—even if we start with the presuppositions of the early writers, viz. those which appear in their doctrine of the Person of Christ, it is a disputable idea that Jesus, as Lord over the law, is not under obligation to fulfil it, and does fulfil it only in our stead. For a God-man of whom that could be said would not be true man, as the Confession earnestly maintains that He is. But His passive obedience too is not stated with logical accuracy. To begin with, Christ does not bear what is really equal to the whole burden of sin endured by the whole of humanity. The identity is insensibly reduced to an inner homogeneousness, and in so far to equivalence; whereas formerly, all the emphasis had been laid on the substitution as perfectly sufficient even extensively; and in the last resort, it must be granted that there cannot even be homogeneousness in the strict sense, for the torment of those who are condemned on account of their guilt cannot

have been suffered by Jesus just as it is by them, viz. with the feeling of being guilty. Next, for the God-man, who possesses the attributes of Divinity even as respects His human nature, death is possible, only if He breaks that perfect unity with the Godhead, in the moment of death, which His human nature had formed, —if He "withdraws" so much from the unity, in order to be able to die; and yet it is precisely on this perfect unity that the efficacy of the blood of Christ depends, for the Atonement of the world. Only it has to be added, that the last-mentioned objections affect the Lutheran theologians more seriously than the Reformed. This applies too, in some degree, to the insoluble difficulties in reference to the *third* point of view we spoke of, viz. the question in what way the substitutionary obedience of Christ comes to be of advantage to us. The alleged transference of His merit to us is a fundamental and uncontested truth in Dogmatics; whereas in Ethics it is as decidedly the case that the transference of merits to others is disputed. If again it is said in behalf of the early writers that, since of course they represented the relation as essentially a legal one, such a transference is unassailable, we must repeat that a transference of the expiation of penalty does not occur even in the legal sphere. But if it were granted, the old objection of the Socinians would continue to stand, and would only be the more unanswerable: they said, if Christ rendered the twofold obedience for us, it is unjust to continue to demand obedience to God's will from us as well.

Doubtless these objections greatly mistake the purpose of the early formulations of the doctrine; but though this is admitted, not only are they not refuted, but the conclusion reached naturally leads farther to the question, whether the *fundamental presupposition*

itself is in exact accordance with Christianity. And this question too must be answered in the negative. The faith in God as holy love, which has been expounded in the Doctrine of God, is more truly a unity, and is more profound, than that which is presupposed by our early writers; and if it is followed out, the conception of the priestly interposition of Christ must be much more carefully investigated and circumscribed, in relation to God, to Christ, and to ourselves. For all those doubts about the essential logical consistency of the traditional doctrine become far more serious, if the presupposition in the case is replaced by the presupposition which is found in the Gospel as correctly understood. No doubt the objection has been raised against such a criticism of the supposed relation between God and man, that even our old divines do not conceive it in the light of such an "external legalism," that it is always conceived at the same time as a personal and moral relation; and that the idea of law in general is well established by the New Testament. What is correct in such a defence was admitted by us in advance, being briefly the motive which impelled the old doctrine not to regard sin lightly, and to establish on firm ground the consolation of forgiveness. But this motive can be satisfied otherwise than by those ideas of "external legalism," which are abandoned by their defenders themselves; in support of which moreover, the New Testament can be requisitioned with less reason, the more carefully we investigate the conception of righteousness.

In this state of matters, it is easily understood how it was only after the complete BREAK-UP of the early Protestant doctrine, that the true purpose of it again came into view. The objections referred to, which were developed with special acumen by the Socinians,

gained their full force in the period of the Enlightenment; when the prevailing feeling was such that, with the extravagant views which were in vogue as to the infinite goodness of human nature, the former estimate of sin appeared a gloomy superstition. The break-up had naturally two stages. First, penal substitution was set aside as the most objectionable element, while it was still allowed that there was some truth in the idea of Christ's interposition in a comprehensive sense; then this idea too fell under the same condemnation. The belief which had been to the fathers the "sole consolation in life and death," continued to be guarded like a hidden treasure only in the seclusion of pious circles, and moreover, where J. A. Bengel's influence was felt, not without enrichment and some relaxation, from the results of New Testament research. In the larger life of the Christian people, what was so much valued was preserved from complete suppression by means of the Church hymns, which were often, it is true, subjected to alteration, and in public worship formed in many cases a surprising introduction to sermons of a totally different tone. In the general deepening and awakening of spiritual life, theological thought was turned once more, after the beginning of the nineteenth century, to the idea of the Priesthood of Christ, which had been lost from memory. And now the restoration began with the portion of the old structure which had offered the longest resistance to the flood of the Enlightenment, —with the idea of the interposition of Christ in a comprehensive sense; whereas that of penal substitution was still opposed, in some quarters with more keenness than ever. The latter assertion applies to people who are otherwise named in the front rank of the renovators of the old faith, such as Menken and Hofmann, and not only Rothe and Ritschl. We may say that what was

common to them in the matter was the position, that there can be no change made in the mind of God, but that the effectual application of the grace of God to sinful humanity is connected somehow with the perfect obedience of Christ, and the greatest proof of it in the endurance of death, as being the pledge of a new humanity. And in consonance with this, there can be no thought of the transference of another's merit; but there can be a participation in the worth of this Representative before God, just in so far as He draws those who belong to Him into a condition like His own,—one which is well-pleasing to God. But now the time was also approaching for the recovery of the idea of penal substitution, which was formerly contested in the first instance, and then buried in the deepest obscurity. Naturally the meaning was weakened and transformed in all sorts of ways. It was said there is no punishment in the same sense as when it applies to us, but there is satisfaction to the inviolable holiness and righteousness of God at the centre of history, at the culminating point of this history of the God-man. The indefiniteness, as regards the relation to the old divines, with which this renovation was effected, one which assumed very different forms in detail (as witness Stahl, Gess, Frank, Cremer, etc.), is shown by the wide-spread preference for the word expiation (*Sühne*), which was held to express the profoundest meaning of the early Protestant doctrine, and also to avoid its severer aspects and its undeniable contradictions,—though it was seldom defined with precision.

Systematic Exposition

Such work, while meritorious in proportion as it was based on the New Testament, becomes fruitful, only if the GOVERNING POINTS OF VIEW have effect given

to them with perfect clearness down to the minutest details; and so we are obliged first of all to define with more precision those which were stated above in a general form. Not to anticipate, we do so, in the first instance, in question-form only; certain though it is that, in the case of most of those questions, the answer, according to all the preceding matter, cannot be doubtful. What we have to consider is the interposition of Christ before God in our behalf, His work as of value for us while it is done before God. But then, as has already been shown (p. 631 f.), we have to consider *in the first instance* what such interposition before God for our sake can signify for God, if we adhere strictly to the Christian idea of God.

This question divides itself into two. First,—has this interposition the power of calling forth God's love to us; and especially, when the sin of man is presupposed, of effecting a change to love, of turning God's wrath into love? Or again,—are certain conditions fulfilled by the means in question, which require to be fulfilled in order that God's eternal love may be manifested; in particular, that it may be manifested in perfection, as forgiving and overcoming sin? No objection can be taken to the word condition. Of course in relation to God's gift of love, it must not be understood in the sense of external legalism; it must be restricted entirely to the sphere of the highest personal life. Now whereas the interposition of Christ, in the significance it has for God, was viewed up to this point in respect to its measure, its power, it is viewed as respects its content in the following question. Is the action of Christ as a whole, which is of value in the sight of God, a trustful acceptance of the Divine will? Or does suffering with a special significance fall to be added to His action, as a kind of devoted recognition of the Divine

holiness, with a view to the awakening or the application of forgiving love to sinners?

Secondly, He who interposes has Himself to be looked at more closely. That He must possess merit in some form, beyond those for whom He interposes, is self-evident. But how has the greatness of that merit to be defined? Must it be in such wise, that it substantially detracts from equality as between Him and others, or in such a way that it leaves that equality unimpaired, and only makes it come more prominently into view? And what character will that action of His possess, which is of such value in God's sight that God manifests Himself as love, and that too in face of human sin? Will it be a special achievement, transcending all His other work; or the perfect fulfilment of a life-work of the moral order, in its kind peculiar to Himself and unique, and forming a whole in itself? The fact that here the point of view of personal, voluntary action gains a significance which is altogether peculiar, we shall see at once when we explain how far Jesus Christ is such a representative for us. But there is an advantage in drawing attention to the matter even here.

Thirdly, we turn our attention to those for whom Christ interposes. Is His work which is done before God in their behalf directed immediately to God; or does it apply immediately to us, while of value in the sight of God for this very reason? And again, is there accordingly a transference, strictly speaking, of His work, His "merit," to us, effected on the part of God; or does the transference consist, rather, in the recognition in God's judgment, of that work of His which is directed to us, but is also of value for God? In other words, is His Priestly interposition in the two last-mentioned relations to be understood in the exclusive or the

inclusive sense? Here the question takes a form which calls of course for the greatest caution.

All these questions are so arranged that, in each case, the one which appears in the second place has to be answered in the affirmative. As regards *the Priestly work of Christ before God in our behalf*, FIRST OF ALL IN RELATION TO GOD HIMSELF, the possibility of a change in the mind of God is excluded by the Christian idea of God. There indeed we find a substantial superiority to all the ideas of God in all other religions. These, as products so far of human longing, betray their origin in this, that favour can be gained from the Godhead by human piety. Our God, whose nature is known entirely from the Revelation He has made, reveals Himself as that love which is eternally His essence, which we do not draw forth, purchase, or merit. And as this is not done by us, neither is it done by a Mediator who interposes for us. He is gifted to us by the love of God. God commends His love, just by the fact that He gives us His Son. It is not the case that His wrath is changed into love: He is not reconciled, either by us or by our Representative; rather, in Christ God reconciles the world to Himself. This is set forth above on the ground of the New Testament evidence, uttered as with one voice. But something quite different and equally undeniable, resulting of necessity from the Christian idea of God, is the truth, that God can *show His love and give men to experience it, in its full efficacy, only on certain conditions.*

In a general way, this follows even from a correct statement of the religious relation. In Christianity we have personal communion between God and man. However certain it is that God has the first and the last word there, however certain it is that of Him, through Him, and to Him are all things, He yet does not desire

to bring about this communion by an act of His omnipotence, after the manner of a process in nature; but, just because it has to be personal communion, with the free consent of our will. He does not force from us our *trust*, our devotion, our returning love; but, although He calls forth these by means of His love, He does so in such a manner that we are under a moral obligation to will, and are not compelled to will, but have also the power of willing differently. With this condition, therefore, He has connected the whole manifestation of His love, as a reality of experience. And for sinners, this trust, this devotion of will, must be combined with *repentance;* for without this bowing in deep sorrow before the majesty of goodness, and the recognition of its inviolability, pardon as a moral act is impossible. We require to recall to our minds all that was said about guilt and the consciousness of guilt.

But now the question arises in the present connexion, whether for the fulfilment of these conditions, on which the Divine love is fully realized in human hearts, especially in sinful human hearts, the *work of another person*, and so here of Jesus, falls to be considered in any way. Even apart from sin, the statement is true with regard to the realization of the Kingdom of God, that it is accomplished formally in accordance with the general rules of the inner life; i.e. it starts with personalities who are leaders or pioneers (p. 342). Only this consideration by itself would not yet lead us beyond the significance of Jesus which was first dealt with, namely as the Revelation which God makes of Himself; that is, beyond His prophetic work. But now, if the Divine love which appears in Christ becomes effectual in us, only, as we saw, through His personal devotion to the love of the Father which was a reality in Him, it is manifest that, while acting on us as Prophet, in the

sense indicated, He has likewise the significance of Priest before God. It is on this personal devotion as His own act that we must now lay the emphasis, on it as something that cannot be brought about by God like an occurrence in nature, but has its reality due to the free receptivity of Jesus for the love of the Father. But in that case this personal devotion of Jesus to the love of the Father is manifestly of value for God Himself, and comes to be of advantage to us in God's judgment, in a way which has yet to be more fully defined; so that He can be called our Representative before God, and we can experience this value which He has in the sight of God as accruing to us. This is quite undeniable, if one thinks out the idea of God's Revelation of Himself. But it is specially clear on the presupposition of sin, in so far as on account of it, we can have no confidence whatever, without dependence on that perfect Revelation of God in Christ, a Revelation which is wholly and entirely personal, in laying hold of that firm faith in God's love without which this love cannot become a reality in us. And then too all this naturally is equally true of faith in that special form, in which sorrowing penitence appears as one of its distinctive marks: it too, and it emphatically, is entirely dependent on that personal Revelation which God makes of Himself in Jesus Christ, is real only because of it, is called forth by it.

But there is *an objection* raised to this line of thought, and it is often expressed with strong feeling. It is distinctly urged in the name of undiluted faith. It is held that it is not enough that God's pardoning love should be accepted with penitence and trust, and that Jesus, so far as He effects this by His work of Revelation as His personal act, is meritorious in God's sight, and is our Representative. An objective judgment on

sin requires to be carried out; satisfaction must be rendered objectively to the Divine righteousness; the inviolable order of just law requires to be manifested in a way that leaves no doubt; and then Christ's Priestly interposition is said to consist in this, that on the Cross He fulfils this indispensable condition for God's pardon. The purpose of these assertions is as unmistakable as that of the early Protestant doctrine which we looked at; and it is without doubt as well warranted as the latter. The object is to recognize God's holy love without reserve, to exclude every conceivable attempt at making light of sin. But these modern forms of thought have as little success as the early doctrine had, in showing clearly how there is "too little" in the requirement of penitence and faith; and in showing what is meant by saying that satisfaction is rendered absolutely, in a purely objective manner, to the holiness of God. Surely the only real factors in the case are God and humanity. A judgment of God that had no reference in its effect to sinful humanity as it stands related to God, but spent itself, as it were, in the void, does not come within the purview of our faith as based on Divine Revelation. All that was said about guilt and punishment, when we have regard to the meaning, must have a bearing on the same situation. The proper punishment of sin is guilt, exclusion from that communion with God in which our life consists; it is ended through His pardoning love, on the one condition that there is penitence and trust, guilt being acknowledged in consciousness as one sorrows over it. That for this purpose Christ acts in a manner which is meritorious in God's sight, is fully admitted: what that means, we are trying just now to make plain to our minds. Christ's interposition is emphatically objective; for in the sphere of the highest spiritual life, what is

more real and objective than a historical person, who manifests himself as one who is meritorious in the sight of God Himself? The fact that we show how this merit in God's sight is founded on the work He does for us, will not be a drawback, but a recommendation; for what is absolutely objective simply does not exist for us: we would have once more in that the vain conception of a species of action directed to the void, we know not to what issue. And in the present connexion, even an appeal to the circumstance that there is a subjugation of demoniacal powers, would of course make no difference whatever on the chief point. On that matter, all that is necessary has already been said, when we were dealing with the question of the origin of sin; here it is quite apart from the connexion of our thought, and could only be introduced by an external use of isolated passages of the Bible.

These ideas are more clearly realized, however, when we consider the SECOND POINT, NAMELY THE PRIESTLY INTERPOSITION OF CHRIST, and now in THE REALITY WHICH IT PRESENTS IN HIM; and not as we have viewed it hitherto, in what might be called its Divine necessity, or more precisely, as it is based on the Christian idea of God. He of all beings is qualified for the purpose contemplated, as He appears in that capacity in which we came to know Him above—as the Son who excels us and yet belongs entirely to our race, and who desires to make us sons. That trust of His by which He awakens the same thing in us, is genuine trust of the most truly personal kind; His recognition of the inviolable will of God, in sorrowing sympathy with us who are guilty, by means of which He awakens repentance on our part, is real homage of the most truly personal kind rendered to God. And here we have no special performance, no special work which stands out

of relation to everything else, whatever the magnitude of that work may be. What we have now to take into consideration is not an element of His work, however small, which was not mentioned above; but quite the same innermost consciousness of Himself and His vocation, and quite the same embodiment of that consciousness in His speaking, acting, and suffering; and once more, on to the completion in His death, and in the life after death. Indeed, it would not even be correct if it were said, that the whole is now viewed in the aspect which it presents as His act, His personal devotion to the Father. For this was what we always pointed out above; as the work of God, Christ's is a reality for us, only because He personally declares the love of the Father in the depth of His own Being, as also in the whole work of His life (p. 611 ff.). But in that previous case, this faith of Jesus, together with His earnest condemnation of sin, was considered *in the value it possesses for us*, as the means of making God's holy love effective. At present it falls to be considered, in so far as it is an achievement of value *for God Himself*, that Jesus by His personal working reveals God to us, makes God's love effective in us; and certainly special emphasis is laid there on His personal act, the act expressive of His freedom.

This is more clearly realized, if at this point, having regard to the traditional form of the doctrine, but by no means on account of it only, we make further and express mention of one aspect of the matter before us, viz. the significance of His *Death*, as the completion of His self-devotion to the Father, as the perfect sacrifice of Himself which was made to God by our perfect High-priest. It has been shown above that it is the Death of Jesus that forms the very kernel of the old doctrine of penal substitution. Now it is certain that

human language does not suffice to extol aright the depth of this mystery,—and a mystery the subject was found from the first to be. But that does not alter the fact, that the concordant testimony of the New Testament presents this mystery as one which is revealed; and that, so far as it can be comprised in a formal statement, the one which is employed above is not inferior to those which may appear at first sight to be more profound. In the test which was the sorest conceivable, in temptation which was the sorest conceivable, He stood firm and was victorious; He preserved His faith, by the preservation of which alone He can awaken and complete our faith in God's love. His purpose of love which He, the Son, knows and seeks to realize as that of the Father, is thwarted by His countrymen though they were trained to appreciate it; indeed, so far as in them lies, it is nullified; sin, which He seeks to take away by His holy love,—which is the present, holy love of the Father,—becomes complete and triumphant. Moreover, the Father abandons Him, outwardly, in bringing Him to the Cross; inwardly, in making the wonted reception of His Fatherly love cease for His consciousness, in the darkness of that Cross—wonted, although it was always effected by personal means, i.e. by a devotion which amid all opposition was constantly renewed. The awfulness of death consists in being left alone, in parting from all that forms the content of life. We readily overestimate our earthly life, just so long as it is not yet truly of value. The life of Jesus had the greatest, most valuable content, the Father's love. At this juncture, the certainty of this life of His, of the Father's love, is lost for Him in darkness: in so far His death was a more bitter death than ours. A lost life may rather reconcile itself to the idea of passing away, even though it were in despair: annihilation

itself comes to be regarded as a comfort. For the life of Jesus, the life which possessed a reality of unique value, death is attended with fear of a unique description, involving as it does the distracting thought—what if this love has been an illusion, this love of the Father, this love to men, understood to be one with the love of the Father who loves Him! The enigmatical, hidden character of God, which comes as a surprise at some time or other to all those for whom God is the reality of their life, is felt by Jesus in the profoundest measure. And in this temptation, as real as ever temptation was, but greater than any other, Jesus continues true to His confidence in the Father, and so also true to us and to His mission in our behalf. The "Why," uttered in His abandonment, is a "Why" addressed to His God. By that great faith He became the originator of our little faith, the author of it, the cause, the pioneer, the surety: we would otherwise be unable to believe in the love of God in Him; it would not otherwise have such personal reality in Him that it could become operative in us.

But now the same thing is also true of the special description of faith, in which it appears as sorrowing and *penitential.* Even as such, precisely as such, it is based in the faith of Jesus wholly and entirely on the Cross. We saw before that God does not desire something indefinite, some indescribable achievement as a satisfaction for sin; but that He must undoubtedly demand something very definite as the condition of His pardoning love, viz. penitential faith. This very definite requirement, penitential faith itself, is based on the Cross of Jesus. As to details, there are different ways open here for Christian reflection. Jesus sees the sin of the chosen people in the first instance, but, as implied in it, that of humanity, completed by the re-

jection of Himself; He knows and feels the intensity of this sin before God more profoundly than any other does, through His obedience to the Father who leads Him by this way, and through His sympathy with the sinful world which He seeks to save. But He does this with the certainty that, through the completion of the sin which was directed against Him, and by His knowledge of it, and His sense of the enormity of it, He will awaken in humanity, which would otherwise remain impenitent, that true sorrow without which trust in the forgiving love of a holy God is morally impossible; and He is certain that in this too, He is realizing the Father's will; in this respect also His saying is true, "it must be fulfilled". In short, by His Cross as the completion of human sin, He in His personal Figure preaches repentance to humanity with unequalled power, and is thus the author of penitence which is heart-felt. This will perhaps be the end of the matter for most of those who agree with our train of thought up to this point. But we may place this thought in still closer relation to the Church's doctrine of penal substitution, without awakening misgivings anew in that quarter. Jesus, we may proceed to say, not only sees in His endurance of death the completion of human sin, and is certain of awakening repentance by this means, but knows and feels on His Cross how inviolable is the sequence in which God has connected sin and suffering —so inviolable, that this arrangement is not broken in His case though He is guiltless, but directly involves Him and must involve Him, in order that, by looking to Him, mankind, who otherwise treat their sin and God's judgment as light matters, may become aware of what sin means. The purpose of God which Jesus understands and seeks to fulfil, and does fulfil, is on this line of thought too, the awakening of true sorrow

as an indispensable element in true faith. But the fate of Jesus which awakens it, is regarded still more directly from the definite point of view, viz. where the Righteous One stands in place of the unrighteous, in order that the absolute contrariety of sin to God may be brought home to men's minds by the doom which He suffers. In this line of thought also, there is nothing asserted about Jesus that may not be asserted about Him with truth; there was no feeling of guilt, but a recognition of the connexion referred to, and so of God's judgment of condemnation pronounced on sin, for the purpose of producing repentance and faith in sinners. But there readily arises an ambiguity, the appearance of a recurrence to the idea of punishment of the innocent person (in the sense of a transference of the consciousness of guilt to him), if we speak of the "judgment" of God which "fell upon" Jesus. That may be correctly meant in the sense indicated above; but it may be also misinterpreted by saying that the same judgment fell upon Him that can only fall upon sinners. This danger requires to be pointed out. If one is aware of it, it may be avoided. And then too we may assert in express terms that the further objection to the explicit idea would be baseless, viz. that it is in any case a variant of the theory of "penal example" (H. Grotius), according to which there must be punishment, at least in one instance, for punishment's sake. Rather it is precisely the purpose of calling forth repentance in sinners that is always the critical matter; and the idea of punishment is conceived in the sense which was previously defined in exact terms.

Then IN THE THIRD PLACE, we discover as a natural result, in what sense CHRIST'S INTERPOSITION IN OUR BEHALF COMES TO BE OF ADVANTAGE TO US. His interposi-

tion before God in our favour does not consist of an act which has direct reference to God, but of one which has reference in the first instance to us. He calls forth that condition of penitential faith, on which alone God's love in Him which operates on us, becomes for us a personal reality. But just because He acts in this way on us, as the originator of our faith, He acts in our favour before God, He is meritorious before God; so that in God's judgment that work comes to be of advantage to us, and He is therefore our Representative before God. Accordingly, we have not by a judgment of God a transference to us of a performance of His, as that of another person; but we have a recognition of what He effects in us, as an act of His which is meritorious in the judgment of God, one on which we may rely, as will have to be shown presently in more precise terms.

The substance of critical significance in this section may be summed up in a simple series of ideas. The love of God, in the special sense emphasized all along, viz. as holy love and yet such as forgives sin, becomes real only for faith, in the special sense of penitential faith which was emphasized all along, in the Revelation of this love in Christ, in the special sense all along emphasized of the word Revelation, viz. as the active manifestation of the holy love of God through a Person. This effective reality of the love of God bestowed on us in Christ is an effective reality, only through the personal devotion of Jesus Christ to the love of God as it was directed to Himself, in the special sense which was set forth above. This devotion of Christ in faith is the active expression of His personal freedom, not a fact called into existence by the creative will of God, of the kind found in nature: this follows inevitably from the fundamental idea of God in Christianity, of which the

content is Love and the form is Personality; and from the fundamental idea of Man in Christianity, which is exactly corresponding. But next, this devotion of Jesus to the Father in faith (all the special senses referred to above being again presupposed), by which alone He becomes to us that reality of Divine love which awakens trust, has the greatest conceivable value not only for us, but also for God. For without it, God's love would not be revealed, God's purpose with the world would not be realized in the world. And we can understand therefore why it is that, in the authoritative declarations of the New Testament, the satisfaction of the Father with the Son is so emphatically asserted, and the whole history of His work in the earthly sphere seems to have an interest, at the same time, for the invisible world.

In what has been said we have not been labouring a cold *dictum* of theology, but have rather expressed a real pronouncement of faith. For this value which Christ possesses *in God's sight,* we know in experience through the value he has *for us.* It is not a pious exaggeration, but a truth founded on the fact itself, that His faith perfected on the Cross, as being the ground of ours, excels it; and that, in the conflicts and fluctuations of our faith, and especially also in the imperfections of our penitential faith, we rely on His which rose to perfection; assured that, as it has formed the ground of ours, it will also prove its power to perfect it. In communion with Him, the perfect Author and Finisher of our faith, we also are in God's judgment well-pleasing to Him, we are held to be precious as Christ is in God's sight. God is gracious to us, not only in Christ, seeing that in Him that grace is really operative for us, but also for Christ's sake; inasmuch as the result that this grace of God is operative in Christ is Christ's personal act.

And yet in our conception of the matter, there is no idea that there required to be a change in the sentiments of God, that Christ performed a work for us which is unintelligible, that the latter had to be transferred to us in external fashion. But the whole idea of the interposition of Christ before God in our interest is so defined that, with all its great importance, it is brought within the framework of the other idea, that "God was in Christ". And this must be the case in any religion, at all events in ours, in which God shows Himself as operative in the form of holy love.

With reference to the affirmations of religious faith regarding the Person of Christ as knowable through His work, it would be a profitable task to point out in express terms how the expressions *Redemption* and *Atonement*, which have been set aside owing to their various significations, are not left out of account as regards that content of theirs which is inalienable, but rather have effect given to them in all their relations. Jesus Christ is now known in reality as our Redeemer, as Deliverer from every obstacle, every fetter, from the guilt and power of sin, and from all the consequences of it, till there is the certainty of a new life from the dead. But this Redemption is not described merely as a process of our consciousness, however certain it is that the process would be something unreal unless we could apprehend it in our consciousness, but rather, as must be the case in genuine religion, as a work of God in us, a work accomplished in this world of our consciousness by the Being who is the most real of all who belong to the invisible, eternal world. God reconciles the world to Himself in Jesus Christ; and the latter has not only this significance, that in Him we are made to experience God and His love in a real way, but that

His trustful devotion to the loving will of God has eternal value for God.

Now as to the *Biblical evidence*, in the sense already established, it would have to show above all, that the two fundamental points of view under which the work of Christ was considered, are those which prevail throughout the New Testament; and that they really give expression to the unity in which the individual statements, in all their multiplicity, are combined. As to the former point, we can easily realize how portions of Scripture which are otherwise widely different, are in agreement on this matter. Attention has repeatedly been drawn to the Pauline conception— "God was in Christ," "God commendeth His love"; and likewise to the fact that this does not exclude, but includes, the truth that "God hath made Him Who knew no sin to be sin". In the exposition in Romans v. the grace of the one man Jesus is plainly mentioned, and this is the same person by whose obedience the many are regarded as righteous in God's judgment. The Epistle to the Hebrews begins, almost with the precision of a doctrinal treatise, by praising the Son, in whom God has conclusively spoken, and yet goes on in this very introduction to extol, along with Himself, the purging of sins which He accomplished; and then the latter topic becomes the main theme of the Epistle. In short, the two points of view, in their essential unity, are always made to appear as supreme. In John, whose thought seems to be directed so completely to the one subject of the work of God for us, of God's Revelation in the Son, there results from this way of looking at the matter, the sanctification of Himself by Jesus for the sake of His people, as the necessary completion of that Revelation; this having, moreover, a peculiar value for God as well. We see how it is stated with special clearness

in the Fourth Gospel, that the Revelation of the "name," of "love," becomes a reality only from the fact that the Son is sustained by the Father's love; inasmuch as He loves the Father, and always acts in accordance with the Father's will. And if, as is natural, such unifying expressions are wanting in the first Gospels, we will yet find none that are simpler, as a description of the whole impression formed by the work of Jesus; and at the same time, we are by no means left without express pronouncements here to the effect that He seeks to be understood in the way we have indicated. Indeed, in what was said above, we purposely restricted ourselves in the first instance, in our allusion to the principal matter, to the statements of the first Gospels. He is sent and is come from God, to establish the sovereignty of God, just as He knows God and therefore also the sovereignty of God; and He completes the will of God in this matter in such a way that God's good pleasure rests on Him, seeing that through Him that will is done on our part. With this now is furnished at the same time the second demonstration which was previously mentioned. In our statements the unity in variety has effect given to it; and yet all conceivable freedom is also left for doing justice to the details with ever-increasing exactness. To select only one point—Jesus is the great champion against all hostile powers and is victor over them, appearing in that character in the Gospels and in the Epistles, especially those of Paul, precisely through that work of His which we recalled to our minds.

Another test of the correctness of the propositions put forward, one which in practice is often more directly convincing, is their agreement with the diverse pronouncements *of Christian experience.* The hymns and prayers of the Church, coming from distant centuries

and strange peoples, are accepted by us without effort of the imagination and without slavish dependence, because we know ourselves to be one with those of the past, in the fundamental experiences from which these utterances proceed. In particular, this applies precisely to the hymns of the Passion, which have so often been described as a touchstone for theological conclusions as to Christ's Atoning work. It would be wrong if we merely took them over, while they did not go to our hearts and make them thrill,—i.e. however, if they did not always undergo a change to suit our case, because the personal circumstances are new: and equally wrong if we could no longer accept them with a common faith. Both things are possible, or rather they actually occur, when we start with the propositions expounded in the foregoing pages, and take the latter as forms which are of value at present for the expression of that religious truth which can be known in experience, but reaches beyond yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. The doctrine of penal Substitution, in the strict sense of the old theology, is a thing of the past: the hymns of Gerhardt are accepted by us with a sense of freedom and truthfulness on our part. The thought in "*Mein Heil, was du erduldet*" ("Saviour, what Thou hast suffered") is naturalized in our systems, as in the Dogmatics of that former day; but not only is the point of agreement more plainly indicated for us, by means of the forms of statement we have offered, than it was by those of the past, but it is seen to be more closely in accordance with the New Testament. And so too, ours are of more service in their own way for preaching in these days. Only let the attempt be made! It is a thing easily said, but hard to prove, that the congregations desire the old form of doctrine, as the only kind that pacifies the conscience. They do long for the undiluted Gospel,

neither more nor less—but in the form best suited for us of to-day. It is an offence to many, when the idea of God's manifestation of His love in the Cross of Christ is described, in Good Friday sermons, we would not say as more worthless, but as of less value, than the idea that on the Cross Christ reconciled God by expiating our guilt. An idea will not really be of inferior value, which is the leading and dominant one in the whole testimony of the New Testament,—"God so loved the world". And as recently set in the framework of that idea, this other is of permanent value, that Christ interposes with the Father in our behalf: when raised to the first place, the latter comes into collision, not with any such faculty as "unregenerate reason," but with that Christian faith itself which has its norm in Divine Revelation.

However, these closing observations on the work of Christ, His Prophetic and Priestly work, can only gain full assent without fail, if it is added beforehand, in express and emphatic terms, that this work is a living continuation of the activity of Christ; in other words, if His Kingly work, which was the description we had to give in the preceding pages of His Prophetic and Priestly functions, is specially looked at in that aspect.

Faith in the Activity of Christ, particularly as still continued

The Prophetic and Priestly Work of Christ, particularly in its Kingly Sublimity

It is not Christ's continued activity in general that has now to be discussed. His Person, understood by us all along through His work, is by no means only a

figure of the past, but, as regards His significance at all events, is active in the present. The question is, however, how this continued activity in the present has to be particularly described. Is it to be taken in the sense that full faith in the Christian salvation is awakened by God, through the continued impression produced on us by this Person; or does God awaken it through Christ as One who continues to live in another order of existence, and Himself constantly makes that historical work of His operative anew? In the former case, the continued activity of Jesus resembles formally that of other heroes who have been pioneers in the spiritual world; even though it is called emphatically personal action, in so far as it is much more closely connected with His Person than the doctrinal pronouncements of a sage or the revelations of an artist are connected with him; and this because of the peculiarity which is often emphasized in the religious life. And here the position is by no means precluded, that the continuation of His personal life is admitted. We cannot be blind to the fact that this conception exercises great power of attraction. Certainly there are Christians in our time who are united to Christ with entire reverence and trust, and yet are but very uncertain in their attitude towards the idea of His continued Personal work, in the stricter sense which we have mentioned; being pressed by all sorts of difficulties which it presents to them. But at all events the confession of faith in the living Lord, in this sense, is the confession of original Christianity—indeed the distinctive mark of it; because the existence of the Christian Church rests on it (1 Cor. I. 2; XII. 3), and at all times the adherents of that Church who have been most vigorous in action have regarded it as the completion of their faith: it is what unites them amid

all the changes in the forms of expression, and with all the difference in the stages of education. Let us recall to our minds the content, the form, the application in practice, the ground, and the permanent significance of that faith.

The Basal Conception

As regards its *content*, the continued Personal work of the Exalted Christ does not consist of additions of power which are indefinable and incapable of proof, as they cannot be brought under any plain conceptions of the faith, and cannot be judged by the norm of historical Revelation. Examples of both of these defects are supplied in sufficiency by the varied history of fanaticism, down to our own days. The work of the Exalted Lord rather consists in the fact, that He makes His historical work on earth operative. And this is true, moreover, for the Church as a whole, and also for believers as individuals—in both cases, with respect to critical moments of origination, development, and completion, in particular. This is indicated by all the statements of the New Testament on the matter (Matt. XVIII. 20; Acts VII. 55 ff.; Gal. I. 12; Phil. III. 12; Rev. I.-III. and John XIV.-XVII.). A careful study of these passages would prove how strong the vital connexion with what was given once for all is felt to be; just because the enthusiasm and freedom of the first times know nothing of the external bondage of later periods. Especially does Paul show this in the most instructive manner, distinguished as he is by the lively consciousness he possesses of holding converse with the Exalted Lord. And however difficult it was afterwards, and still is even for us, in the particular case, to know and to keep within the bounds which divide faith from

fanaticism, the solution of this difficult question which is reached from time to time marks the effective advances made by the Christian Church, and in the life of the individual Christian: we may think of Luther, Spener, J. A. Bengel, and Schleiermacher. A genuine, positive development is guaranteed, and that which is only seeming is precluded, by the advance in the knowledge of the testimony of the first period, by a deeper searching of Scripture, by an understanding of its details concurrently with a fuller understanding of the nature of our religion, as obtained, with the aid of Scripture itself, in the light of a religious philosophy of history (p. 298 ff.). And it is only little faith that sets bounds in arbitrary fashion to the action of God, who is really forming a new creation through Christ at every period: faith, joyful and obedient, watches for Revelations which are ever fresh from Him who has become manifest in Christ. There is a kind of looking to the past which is unchristian, bespeaking a petty mind, as there is a kind of looking to the future which is unchristian, void of content. The upward look of faith to the Exalted Christ raises one above each of these habits.

In full conformity with the historical work of Jesus, the content of the continued activity of the Exalted Lord may be summed up under the same points of view. He glorifies that earthly work of His in which the Father works on us, by showing its eternal significance amid all the changes of the times; He reveals Himself, and with Himself the Father, in a form which is always new, such as new people need, and yet, so far as they always remain the same in their profoundest need, in that love of His which is always necessary, always real. The life-work of all the great and of all the little in His kingdom is *His* work, so far as it is of permanent

value. But as He is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, as the Prophet of Kingly rank, He is likewise ever the same as the Priest of Kingly rank. As He surpassed, and thereby put an end to, all other sacrifices by the sacrifice of Himself, so He makes this one offering, which is perfected to eternity, for ever efficacious (Rom. VIII. 34; Heb. IV. 14 ff.). He does that, as even Calvin in his time explains, not by an external representation, as if God required to be made gracious in His sentiments,—nowhere have we approved of that idea above,—but as one who belongs to us, and is precious in God's settled judgment, as the author and finisher of our faith. Through Him we are not strangers in the invisible world, which is otherwise so mysterious, but rather through the Son we are sons who wait for the "Revelation of sonship"; and just for that reason we take part in every "development," in all the progress of the Kingdom of God on earth, being in the very foremost rank of combatants, animated with the most energetic courage, because filled with a hope which maketh not ashamed.

Corresponding to the content of the continued work, is the *mode in which it is manifested.* As we must expect, we can as little discern it with adequate clearness in the present stage of our existence, as we can the inner life of God and its relation to the world, if we consider the latter in its form, and not in its substance as revealed to us. But as to the fact of such action of the Exalted Christ, as the King of His Church in subordination to God, faith cannot have any misgiving. At the same time sentimental converse in love with the Exalted Lord with mounting feelings of bliss, and the pains which then follow of necessity when one is left forlorn—this is precluded. And visions such as are not altogether wanting in the first period, were yet

acknowledged even then, precisely by the greatest Christians, as being but of limited value, as is manifest for example from 2 Corinthians XII. It is rather in reverential trust that this fellowship with the Exalted Lord shows itself to be living. As being purely spiritual, it is both less and more than converse with the historical Jesus. It is less, because wanting the mediation of the senses. It is more, because it is also free from the fetters of such mediation. When taken up into the glory of the Divine life, our Lord is near His people without regard to space and time; and faith knows no other limit except that which is strongly insisted on in the sublimest hymns of praise in the New Testament, one which is not external, but essentially necessary and self-evident —"to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. II. 10 f. and parallels). The saying, "from God, in God, to God," applies precisely to that work of His which is uniquely accordant with God's in His Exaltation in the highest sense, as it was before. Naturally it is just this aspect of Christian faith which exhibits with peculiar distinctness the character of hopefulness (1 John III. 1 ff. and parallels).

For *practical use*, the Pauline expression "in Christ, in the Lord," has proved to be a watchword of Christendom for which there are endless applications. Paul connects it with all possible relations of life, even with such as are quite opposite. He believes and loves, hopes, suffers, rejoices and fears, eats and drinks, lives and dies, in Christ. His whole life is completely determined by Christ and based on Christ as exalted and present, while one with the historical Jesus who was obedient unto death, who was crucified and rose again. The special proof of this attitude towards the Lord is the *invocation* addressed to Him (1 Cor. I. 2; Phil. II. 8 ff.), which is not merely homage, for which no external

limit is marked (2 Cor. XII. 1 ff.), because it finds one all the more surely in itself, both as regards the range and the urgency of the petitions. In particular, the unchangeable adjunct, "to the glory of God the Father," applies also to this perfecting of faith in Christ. All invocation of Jesus is in the last resort adoration of God who is revealed to us in Him. Any additional honour, as it might appear to be, would according to His own clear declaration be an impairment. Not always has the Christian Church, nor have its individual members, maintained the chaste reserve of the Church of the first age and its members; not always have they maintained the same confidence. Prayer to the Saviour has supplanted prayer to the Father, and on the other hand it has been suspected of being unchristian, Heartfelt confessions in truthful biographies, together with the prayers and hymns appointed for congregational devotion, show plainly what important rights the individual and likewise the separate circle have in this sacred concern of faith, but also how unchangeable are those limits which are essential to the religion. To genuine prayer, the mere supposition that the object of its trust is not a unity is intolerable; but for it, Jesus is with equal certainty united to the Father in such wise that, while there is an invocation of the Father, there is also an invocation of Jesus, with a meaning of its own which falls under no suspicion.

The *ground* of faith in the continued activity of the Lord does not consist of subjective experiences as such, especially it does not consist of strongly excited feelings, nor yet of reflections on the necessity or value of such a condition; but there is just the same basis as for all true saving faith, and for saving faith in Christ in particular. All that was previously set forth in our Apologetics, and now under Christology, regarding the grounds

of saving trust, applies to our special question. But pp. 209 ff. should very specially be compared. From the nature of the case, express promises, like Matthew XVIII. 20, XXVIII. 20, are of great significance in this matter; yet this can be said even of them, not in their isolation, but as forming a unity with the whole claim of Jesus, maintained in life and death, to the effect that, like the beginning of the Kingdom of God, the development and completion of it also are bound up with Him.

Resting on this firm ground, we understand further the *consistency and value* of this faith, whether we think of Christ Himself or of our own case. When we think of Him—for His continued life, which is for His Church a matter of certainty, can be nothing else on His part but continued work for it: the function He performs is in truth connected with His Person in a unity which is indissoluble. So with regard to us—for even among men, personal converse with those who are superior to us is more than the result of the impression produced by their character. How much more in the case of Christ, in whom the love of God is brought to bear effectively on us! The difference of His work in the state of Exaltation from the work in this world of the senses, we have already pointed out in express terms; but for the Church, this difference is only a necessary and intelligible explication of the faith we are considering, not an abolition of it (Gal. II. 20; Col. III. 1 ff.). Whatever else is said in religion and philosophy of an invisible but real converse of perfected spirits with us, generally without clear proof or content, generally too not without great danger, is not required by Christian faith, particularly when viewed as faith in the glorified Lord of the Church. We Evangelical Christians especially know that, in this possession of faith in the

Exalted Lord, we hold something infinitely greater than the Church of Rome supplies, in her sacrament of the altar. But we know too that the apparent advantage would be on the side of Rome, if we ourselves could not believe in the purely spiritual presence of the Exalted Christ,—a Presence which is for that very reason the most Real of all.

Faith in Christ, as described in the preceding pages, being completed in faith in the continued activity of the Exalted Lord, has still to be related in express terms to what is known to us in the traditional phrase as the

Confession of the Divinity of Christ

The expression is very seldom found in the New Testament, and obviously it occurs as a directly religious utterance, not at all in the abstractly dogmatic form "Divinity of Christ": the "fulness of the Godhead" in Colossians II. 9 is a proof of this statement, instead of being opposed to it. It has also to be noted that in the undoubted passages it is used without the Article, unless the latter is a mark of the Vocative. The term occurs certainly in John I. 1, XX. 28; Hebrews I. 8; perhaps in Romans IX. 5; probably not in 1 John V. 20: "We are in Him that is true," i.e. in God, "inasmuch as we are in His Son Jesus Christ"; and this God in whom we are, only if we are in Christ, is called "the true God, and eternal life". In Titus II. 13, while the indissoluble connexion of Jesus Christ with the "great God" is manifest, it is equally true that for that very reason the more specific interpretation is questionable. In these circumstances, the idea may occur to us at the first blush, that the Christian world in the earliest age as a rule avoided the predicate God, as one which was

far too high. But in the same Scriptures Jesus is called Lord without reserve, and an exact acquaintance with antiquity shows us with increasing plainness how closely in the linguistic usage of that period, precisely as derived from the East, lord and god were combined in reference to gods and emperors. Besides, the Christians transferred to their "Lord" the loftiest expressions conceivable, namely those applying in the Old Testament to the Covenant God in connexion with the glorious Revelation which He promised (Rom. x. 12; Phil. II. 9 ff.). The non-Christian peoples accordingly had a fine feeling for the circumstance, that the Christian Church, when it called Jesus Lord, or in those rare cases God, was concerned with something far more serious than a new creation of human fancy, to be added to their syncretistic Pantheon. They would have had no objection to the word god, in the sense in which it was current among them; but to them the Lord of the Christians was an intolerable offence. Thus it will be possible to say rather that the misuse of the word in ancient times might have caused the Church to hesitate. Broadly speaking, it expressed not too much for her, but too little. But on the other hand, what she meant was not an increase of faith of the same species; rather it was something essentially different. What was in her thought, she could find to be expressed by the term only in an obscure and erroneous fashion. It was not because speculative difficulties of which she was conscious, occasioned by the relation of her Lord to the inner Divine life of the one God, had been suggested to her from the first; but doubtless because any tampering in practice with Monotheism was far from her mind, and yet she could not separate faith in the one living God from faith in Jesus Christ. She believed in Him as the full personal Revelation of the one God of salva-

tion, who began to reveal Himself in the Old Covenant, and promised that the Revelation would be made perfect; as Jesus Himself gave it to be understood that all the highest names of this God,—Shepherd, Physician, King, Judge, Helper, Redeemer,—were realized in Him by what He did, and described them in express terms as realized in Him. This decisive significance also appears plainly enough in those few passages in which Christ is called God: as being the Revelation which God makes of Himself, He belongs in the view of our saving faith to the side of God; as surely as He belongs in a real way to us, as the man who personally reveals God (cf. pp. 606 ff.).

If the New Testament matter is rightly understood in what we have put forward, we may say that, in all the preceding exposition, we have given expression to this original signification of faith in Christ, without using the word Divinity. Thus the use of it is warranted, so far as it is an expression for this saving faith. But without the word, this saving faith can also be expressed by the other words which appear more frequently in the New Testament,—Son of God, Lord, Redeemer, indeed by the simple form Jesus Christ. In fact we can add that faith in Christ is unifying; whereas language about His Divinity may as well cause division, and in our circumstances, which have been shaped by history, must often cause division. And even apart from a common understanding between parties, or failure in that matter, the feeling of the individual who has faith in Christ is readily oppressed and confused by the language in question; whereas the confession that Jesus is Lord fills Him with thankfulness and joy. Thus the reserve which is described above as shown by the New Testament should be to us of the present day an indication which merits our gratitude, telling as it

does that we should avoid using the mistakable term, and should seek to gain a fuller understanding of the matter before us, and to express it with increasing simplicity. The essential difference between our faith in Christ and all syncretistic mysticism in worship, becomes in this way much plainer than by a vague revival of old speculations upon the "Divinity" of Christ. The very preference shown in the New Testament for the word "Lord" rather than "God," and that too just when "Lord" is used in the relation which it bears to the Old Testament, points out the proper course for us; as being the full Revelation of God, Jesus is more than any "god" of the religion of the olden time; but just for that reason He is not "God," otherwise He would not be a Revelation of God.

FAITH IN CHRIST: PRESUPPOSITIONS AND INFERENCES

The last point in our discussion reminds us with special clearness of the fact, that the immediate pronouncements of faith regarding Christ have not exhausted the whole amount of the material which one is accustomed to expect in the Doctrine of Christ, and that too in the place of primary importance. The reasons why this expectation could not be fulfilled have now, we may suppose, become plain; but it will also be clear, that the matter which has been put in the background ought not to be eliminated altogether. Here certainly we have no factitious questions before us, but such as necessarily arise from the positions we have adopted. That unity in which, as we observed, the work of God and of Jesus is embraced, the unity which faith experiences and by which it lives, must further engage the thought of Christian people. The topic of

God and Man in personal fellowship with each other is the great object of all religious knowledge; and it holds this position in our religion, where it is concentrated in the Person of Jesus Christ, in a deeper and more comprehensive sense than it does in any other. Now the Christian faith includes special truths regarding God and man—those which we found represented to us on the ground of the Revelation of God in Christ. The question therefore is, whether these Christian conceptions of God and man permit us, and then oblige us, to penetrate more deeply than we have done into the mystery of this individual Person, in whom God and man become one in a way which is unique; and to define with greater exactness the positions which we previously adopted. Only, in connexion with a question of the kind, we must not forget what is already settled by the course of our inquiry and has no longer to be considered by us. This is the conception of a man whose equality with us would be so emphasized, that there was no place for any essential difference; or that of a manifestation of God which would destroy the essential equality with us—in the language of the early Church, the Ebionite and the Gnostic heresies. That in the work of the man Jesus, we experience by faith the work of God—this is the fundamental meaning of the positions we previously adopted. But then the question, how this Person who is to be known by His work, this self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ, has to be more particularly understood from the point of view of the Christian ideas of God and man which we owe to faith in that Revelation, naturally falls into two questions—how is what is Divine in Him related to God? and looking to Himself, how is the Divine in Him related to what is human? Let it not be said that this twofold question already presupposes a definite answer

to our basal question regarding the relation of God and man, viz. that given by the early Church. Certainly the twofold question is most familiar to us in the special form which was then shaped ; yet it springs necessarily from the subject itself. But undoubtedly there may be different answers to that basal question. On the one hand, it may be said that the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ is the Incarnation of the eternal Son of God. In that case, the twofold question is this—how is the eternal Son of God related to God ? And in the God-man, how is the eternal Son of God related to His human nature ? The former is the Trinitarian question of the early Church, the latter the Christological in the narrower sense. On the other hand again, it is said that the self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ is the realization of the content of the Divine life, in the form of a human self-consciousness. In this case, our two-fold question is—how is this self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ related to the nature of God ? And in Jesus Christ, how is the content of the nature of God which is revealed, related to the form of the human consciousness that reveals Him ?

The first point of view from which the basal question may be answered, the dependent questions being then as we have stated, is that of the early Church, more correctly described as the *theocentric.* For it finds the centre which regulates the movement of the inner life of this Person in the eternal Son of God. In contradistinction to it, the other point of view may be called *anthropocentric.* For the vital move-ment of this Person, with all the uniqueness of its content, is truly human as regards the form. In its main substance, this position was first clearly repre-sented by Schleiermacher. As we recall Schleiermacher, we are also shown that the expressions theocentric

and anthropocentric Christology, belong to *this division* of the subject, where we have to do with the ultimate presuppositions of faith in Christ, and with the inferences to be drawn from it. For in this faith itself (in intention, whatever conclusion we form as to the realization of it), Schleiermacher is at one with the early Church. We cannot therefore say that the anthropocentric type regards Jesus as an example, and the theocentric as a Revelation of God (J. Kaftan). The very theologian from whom the distinction is derived (Landerer) was an effective opponent of those who estimate Jesus only as an example, as surely as Schleiermacher himself was. Consequently we adhere to the linguistic usage which has been stated. But then certainly the second view, the anthropocentric, must not be contrasted, through the use of the watchword "ethical Christology," with the first or theocentric as the "metaphysical" species, a course to which there was long a tendency. Even anthropocentric Christology, so far as it goes beyond the immediate pronouncements of faith, makes use of certain general ideas as to the relation of the Divine and the human, which may just as well be called metaphysical as those of theocentric Christology. Only they belong to a different metaphysical school, one which, we quite admit, derives its guiding principles substantially from Ethics and History.

Now from these considerations, it becomes possible to know fully the essential value of the distinction we have drawn between pronouncements of faith and presuppositions of these. For one thing, we gain perfect freedom in our hearts by means of it, as we approach the discussions which are yet in waiting; for they do not touch the innermost sanctuary of our faith. The fact that different Christians, whose attitude to Christ

in the matter of faith we cannot dispute, think differently on those remaining topics, and much more the fact that, in the New Testament itself, there are very different assertions with respect to them, loses anything that may be surprising in it, and even critical for faith. For it is not at this point at all that we begin to ask about faith in Christ; rather this faith is already established, and the only question is with regard to the ultimate expression for it, which may perhaps have yet to be reached. The inference that, if no agreement is reached on the present question, we cannot have faith in Christ, would be as unreasonable as to insist, that we cannot allow any one who is eminent in the realm of thought or feeling to exert an influence on us, till all the obscurities of our conceptions as to the mind's action are removed. Hence we have a thorough interest in the pros and cons of the theocentric and anthropocentric views, but are delivered from the fancy, that our attitude to Christ in the matter of faith is directly affected thereby. There is a second advantage over and above. In the immediate pronouncements of faith, we have gained a standard for the judgment which we form on what follows. Even one who could bear witness with the tongues of angels, in behalf of the one or the other Christology, but did not supply proof of its value for our faith in Christ, would be of no account to us; and the one or the other is right, in proportion as it can assist us in this critical matter.

In this sense we speak first of the *Theocentric Christology of the Early Church*, and of its fate; then of the Anthropocentric. Thereafter we come to the attempts to renew the former in such a manner that the results achieved by the latter may be preserved. Lastly, there follows a word in closing with reference to this development.

The Christology of the Early Church

The Christology of the Early Church and its Fate

The Confesssion of the Evangelical Churches acknowledge the Christology of the Council of Chalcedon. This formula of A.D. 451 explains its basal conception —"two Natures in one Person"—only by means of negative propositions. The two Natures, the Divine and the human, both viewed as perfect, are united in one Person, the God-man, while they are untransmuted and unmingled, as also undivided and not separated. These forms aim at putting an end to the disputes that necessarily arose, as soon as Jesus Christ was described as being of the same nature as the Father, and of the same nature with us. But since they were confined to negation simply, it is admitted by that, that *they cannot be fully thought out;* and the whole of the succeeding history is the history of attempts to make them capable of being thought out, by means of some cautious explanation, without violating the forms themselves, but rather with the acknowledgment that they are inviolable. The *possibilities* which are presented in these circumstances are clearly defined. We may *either* make some abatement from the perfection of one of the two Natures, with the view of maintaining strictly the unity of the Person; *or*, in order to uphold strictly the perfection of the Natures, we may make some concession as to the unity of the Person. In the latter case, we only obtain a relation of the closest description between the two perfect Natures in Jesus Christ, but not a really personal unity of the eternal Son of God and the Son of man: such was the position of the Nestorians before the date of Chalcedon, and such at a later period was the Christology of the Reformed Church, which recognized the authority of that Council. In the former

case, there are theoretically two ways open: the perfection of the human Nature is limited—this was the direction taken by the Greek Christology in its original bent, by an Apollinaris, a Eutyches, a Cyril, before the period of Chalcedon; and following on the decision at that Council, by the official doctrine of the mediaeval Church as to the *Enhypostasia* of the human Nature; and thereafter by the Christology of the Lutheran Church, with its "concealed Monophysitism," i.e. with its impairment of the complete humanity, for the purpose of preserving the strict unity of the Person of the incarnate Logos. The other possibility, where there is the same object in view, is that we detract from the perfection of the Divine Nature in the God-man. But to the thought of the early Church this possibility was intolerable. Only under quite different conditions could the venture be made, and a demission of His attributes by the eternal Son of God be affirmed.

All such attempts only show with increasing clearness, what good reason there was for the decision at Chalcedon having been limited to negative phrases; for such as are affirmative at once fall, of necessity, under some one of the rejected heresies. And those pronouncements have been aptly compared to buoys, which show the right course for navigation, and give warning of the dangers which threaten on right and left. On the other hand, all other attempts at justifying the old formula are empty words. So when it is asserted, that the mistake in it is, that it starts with the Natures and not with the Person; and yet it cannot be said how the latter course is to be adopted, without giving up the whole intellectual apparatus of the early period. Or when it is pointed out, that the ancients used these words, Natures and Person, more vaguely than we do: doubtless that is true, but it is nothing but an admission

that they are imperfect. Again when it is said in these latest times that we have simply to reconstruct the doctrine of the Natures on the principles of voluntarism (Gruetzmacher), that just means giving it up; for doubtless it was not meant in the sense of "voluntarism". But as to whether the old formula is to be maintained for ever, in the sense that it marks the correct course in the manner indicated,—the decision of that question depends on the decision of one which goes much deeper, viz. the question, whether this idea of "two Natures in one Person" is the inalienable, necessary presupposition of saving faith in Christ. We have already convinced ourselves above, that its origin is associated with a conception of the blessing of salvation which, at all events, does not coincide with the Evangelical conception (pp. 584 ff.). But just for that reason, we have now to look more closely at the Christology of our Reformers and of the Church of the Reformation, in its relation to that of the early Church.

The Gospel of Christ, who brings and guarantees the grace of God, is the source of faith, forgiveness of sin, and so also of life and blessedness. This new understanding of salvation is inseparably connected with a new knowledge of the Saviour; or, as being a return to the original understanding of salvation, it is also a return to the original message regarding Christ (pp. 586 ff.). The truth that, as we look to Him, to the incomparable fact of His Person, all sorts of ultimate questions, presuppositions and inferences, emerge, is what we have to consider in the present section of this book; but that the answer for these must necessarily be that which was given at Chalcedon, is not yet made out. It was precisely the latter, however, that the Reformers recognized as the sacred inheritance from the past. And yet, at all events in its original intent, it

was not directly concerned with the experience of salvation above referred to. To have God, forgiving love, really present in the work of Jesus, and to be able to apprehend these through that work,—it was in the modern period of the Reformation that the interest of faith was attached to that object. Luther preached that with a new emphasis—"this man is God; God is this man". Now if this faith was expressed by the old formula, the inseparableness of the two Natures in the one Person, which was always maintained, required to be insisted on with an earnestness which was never previously thought of, in its application to this Jesus, who teaches and does good in Galilee, who suffers and dies at Jerusalem.

Such is the significance of the line of thought on which the *Lutheran Christology* was shaped. The consequence of the act of unification of the two Natures is their Personal unity as the condition. The fact that in that condition there is a real unity, is emphasized by the idea of the community of the Natures. On the ground of this community, there is warrant for the statements regarding the Person—the man, Jesus Christ, is God, and God is man, viz. in Jesus Christ; while of course we cannot say that the Divinity is the humanity, and vice versa. This unity of the two Natures in the Person is only completely assured, however, by the recognition of the *Communicatio idiomatum*, the intercommunication of the attributes of the two Natures in the Person. And this, too, was meant in a particular sense which was only now brought out. For as a general truth, such communication had already been asserted in the early Church, and it was effected in two ways. On the one hand, attributes of the Divine or of the human Nature are ascribed to the Person of the God-man, whether the latter is described from the point

of view of the Divine or of the human Nature, or both. That is the meaning of such statements as—the Lord of glory is crucified ; the Son of Man is in heaven ; Jesus Christ yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever. This was readily called *genus idiomaticum.* Or else attributes of the Person are ascribed to the Divine or to the human Nature, or to both, i.e. of course to the Natures in the Person of the God-man, to the Son of God, the Son of man, Jesus Christ. The latter method of communication of attributes was applied with special reference to the work of the God-man in establishing salvation, whence the name *genus apotelesmaticum.* In this connexion we have the statements—the Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil ; the Son of Man came not to destroy men's souls, but to save them ; Christ died for us and rose again. But this communication of attributes appeared to be fully established, there was the faith that a God-man had come who was truly a unity, only when the attributes of each of the Natures are communicated to the other Nature. This is the famous third method of the communication of attributes in the Lutheran system. In the unity of the Person, the attributes of the Divine Nature are communicated to the human : even with respect to His human Nature, Christ is omnipotent and omnipresent. Of course, that the Divine Nature also assumed the attributes of the human, becoming weak, liable to suffering, mortal,—this conclusion was rejected : the majesty of the human Nature was recognized, but not the humiliation of the Divine, or, as was said, the *genus majestaticum,* but not the *genus tapeinoticum.* For the principle that what is Divine is unchangeable was beyond question ; it was only under totally different conditions that this principle was given up.

Now an Almighty human Nature is obviously an idea that cannot be thought out, a logical contradiction. But our faith would perhaps have reason to cleave to it as a mystery. Yet it could only do so, of course, if it were really in conformity with the interest of faith, for the sake of which it was put forward. However, the point to be noted is this—"in order to have a Lord who is indubitable, one whom we can actually apprehend" (Luther), that extraordinary statement as to the communication of the attributes of the Natures had been hazarded; and now the result was, that there was no such Lord who was indubitable. For this product of thought is not the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament, the Revelation which God has really made of Himself in this real world, but, as those of the Reformed Church said with scorn, a creation of fancy, a display of the power of imagination, a God-man who is no longer truly man, and therefore not "*a* Being, *an* Essence, allowing it to be said with truth—this man is God; God is this man". It had to be admitted that, when the matter was brought to an issue, as it was thought out with the strictest consistency, the end which was sought was not attained. There could be no return, however, to the vague conception of deification which prevailed in the early Church. That was precluded, not only by the recognition of the formula of Chalcedon, but still more by the fact that, from the point of view of Evangelical Christianity, which emphasized the experience of salvation, the humanity of the God-man had been more profoundly grasped than it formerly was.

In this difficulty relief seemed to be got from an idea which, just like that of the communication of attributes, was handed down from antiquity, but was never understood in a strict sense; yet now that this notion of communication was carried out in full, had also to be

carried out in earnest,—the idea of the *emptying of self*, of *Kenosis* (cf. Phil. II. 5 ff.). It was now taught that a distinction has to be made between the ideas of incarnation and emptying. The Subject as the Being who empties Himself is the Person of the God-man, as He is posited by that act of unification of the Divine with the human Nature which was spoken of; but the Subject with respect to whom this emptying takes place is the human Nature. With respect to the latter, the God-man resigns, not indeed His possession of the Divine attributes, but the employment of them. So the Giessen theologians of the seventeenth century held, in the dispute with those of Tübingen. The latter put a greater restriction on the amount that was resigned, teaching that, even with respect to the human Nature, the God-Man uses the Divine attributes; that when a child in the crib, He rules the world even with respect to His human Nature, though secretly; and so in later life also, it is only at intervals that the Omnipotence and Omniscience are manifested. In our latest Lutheran Confession, both conceptions, the stricter and the more moderate, continue simply to stand side by side. We do not require to show that in each of the forms, this doctrine of *Kenosis* does not attain what it seeks to attain. It presents too little real humanity, to be able to find the traits of the New Testament figure of Christ reproduced in this Person of the God-man. And yet, on the other hand, if we set out with the presuppositions of the early theologians, it has taken away too much to begin with from the Divinity. This matter was dealt with above, in connexion with the Doctrine of the Atonement. The God-man, whose blood is of infinite value, does not really die, if, in order to be able to die, He requires to empty Himself of the Divine attributes with respect to His human Nature. For at

this moment at least, there is a real emptying, a real severance in the personal unity of the Divine and human Natures.

The Reformed theologians, on their part, conceived the subject of the emptying to be the eternal Son of God, not the God-man. But in view of the immutability of what is Divine, it is not so much a humiliation for the Son of God, as an exaltation of the human Nature which is assumed by Him. Now from this point of view, it was undoubtedly easier to do justice to the concrete features of the Biblical Christ. But if the decision of Chalcedon was said to continue at the same time, as an unassailable presupposition, this is obviously a mere assertion. The unity of the Person is here called in question, in favour of the completeness of the Natures, just as clearly as the completeness of the human Nature is called in question by the Lutherans, in favour of the unity of the Person. The objection of the Reformed theologians to the Lutherans, that with them Christ is an empty show, was met by the Lutherans with the counter objection that, according to the Reformed, the Logos remains outside the flesh, and the flesh outside the Logos : the charge of Monophysite or even Docetic heresy was met by that of Nestorian or even Ebionite. On both sides, the impossibility of carrying out the old formula to the full logical issue was made manifest anew ; but now the inferior value of it for faith was obvious at the same time. It was for the sake of faith that they aimed at thinking it out fully ; but faith was less able to accommodate itself to it, the more earnestly it sought to grasp it in thought. As to the only other possible way (p. 676) of preserving the unity of the Person—by referring the emptying to the Divine Nature itself—we can only decide, after we have come to know in principle

what forms the counterpart to the early theocentric Christology.

The Anthropocentric Christology

Rationalism knew nothing of faith in Christ (pp. 587 f.); its Dogmatics had therefore, strictly speaking, no Christology. There was again an ascending line of thought, originating in the general outburst of mental activity. One effect of the return to the sources of life, of the new esteem which was cherished for all that was great and original, was that men were led back to Jesus. And the new determination of the relation between the Divine and the human which was thus occasioned, came to be of advantage for Christology. God and man were now regarded no longer from the point of view of an opposition, namely of the "Natures," the "finite and infinite" modes of existence in their formal and universal aspect, but from that of unity, namely a common content in respect of value, whether that unity might be conceived rather as universal and intellectual, as with Hegel, or as more definitely moral, with Kant and Herder for example. The idea of God incarnate in man, which was ridiculed by Rationalism, appeared the sum of wisdom. But of course, what the Church said of the historical Person Jesus, was held to apply only to the Idea: the separation of principle and person becomes the watchword of the Philosophy of Religion, and of the theology connected with it (pp. 115, 125 ff., 181 ff.).

The great attempt to utilize these new elements of culture, so as to obtain a new expression for faith in Christ in its full sense, is the Christology of Schleiermacher, a counterpart of the Athanasian on Evangelical

ground; which founded on the principle that the Doctrine of Christ must exactly correspond to the effects wrought by Christ, and thus brought about a revival of the original impulse of the Reformation. "There is no other means of continuing to have part in the fellowship of Christians, except by faith in Jesus as Redeemer": Christian piety means "admission to the power of His God-consciousness, and to His serene blessedness." "The Redeemer is, accordingly, like all men, by virtue of the sameness of human nature; but different from all, owing to the constant power of His God-consciousness, which was in a distinctive sense the Being of God in Him." In these last words is found the new matter that falls to be considered by us in the present connexion. The Being of God in Jesus is not a combination of the Divine Nature, or of the eternal Son of God, with human nature, or with the man Jesus, but a real Being of God in the form of human consciousness; in conformity with the fundamental idea which was stated, to the effect that Divine and human are not to be conceived as Natures which are opposite, but in their spiritual and moral relation to each other.

To be sure, Schleiermacher did not succeed in shaping this new presentation of the old faith, faith in Christ, in a way which was free from objection. What he finds in his personal experience, and attests in defiance of all the opposing powers of his time—for had he not been so deeply affected, the influence of these would have led him, in all respects the most impressionable of men, to be satisfied with the more indefinite idea of the incarnation of God in humanity—was to a large extent, in his presentation, only a programme and task for the future. Neither the necessity, nor the reality, nor the possibility of such a Person was

sufficiently established by him. That He is necessary, indispensable for religion, is not proved. For the strengthening of the God-consciousness which was mentioned, without the full sense for the forgiveness of guilt which the Reformers possessed, or for any Personal God at all, may equally well be understood from the Christian *Principle:* the inference as to the unity of God with the Person of the Redeemer, as to the formative, personal original, is not sufficiently safeguarded from the suspicion of being a hyperbolical expression of faith. So too the historical reality of this Redeemer is always in danger of being lost; e.g. the description given of the sinlessness is not that of a champion and conqueror: there is rather the acquisition of superior power in a natural manner by a higher Principle. Lastly, such a Person is unintelligible to us in his significance generally, unless the Personal God is more clearly distinguished from the bare unity of opposites in the world. And so in the last resort, there is one and the same fault—the Romantic, Pantheistic background of the whole.

It was to these points, therefore, that the work of THE SUCCESSORS OF SCHLEIERMACHER was directed; and that too, precisely when they held His fundamental idea in all its strictness, and did not want to combine it with the old view. And we may observe that, with reference to the two last-mentioned points, the work of the Mediation Theology, as it is called (pp. 113 ff.), is specially meritorious, as Ritschl's is with reference to the first of them (pp. 119 ff.). The *fundamental idea* itself was often explained in this way. It is not a Divine hypostasis that is combined with human nature; but the Divine life in its most exalted essence constitutes the innermost content of a personal life which is truly human in its form. Now what is most Divine in God

is not omnipotence, but love. It was not with respect to His metaphysical, but with respect to His ethical attributes, that God became man in Jesus: it is the motives and purposes of God that make up the content of His self-consciousness, the psychical form being the same as in us, but their strength and purity being unsurpassable. In this way,—and the point is then readily emphasized,—the old forms begin to get the meaning they have which is of value for religion, and which was originally contemplated. The saying is now held to be true—this man is God, and God is this man: the former clause, however, in so far as the man perfectly reveals God; the latter, in so far as God perfectly reveals Himself in him. The Divine is now held to be in a position to comprehend the human, and vice versa; and the phrase, "undivided and not separated," is as true as the other phrase, "untransmuted and unmingled". But these statements, it is alleged, are capable of being logically thought out, from the point of view of the distinctly Christian conceptions of God and man. For God as Spirit can be in man as spirit, God as love desires to be wholly in man; but in such communion in spirit and in love, man reaches his true destiny. The matter has been elaborated with special care and refinement of thought by Rothe, Landerer and H. Schultz.

This fundamental idea of the anthropocentric system acquired more lucidity and certainty, in proportion as its supporters devoted careful attention to the *particular questions* of Christology, and with express reference to the historical reality of the Redeemer; especially to the origin of this Person, His sinlessness, and His continued activity.

His *Origin*, according to their exposition, cannot be understood from a natural connexion with the species, which is sinful. If even the origin of the life of any

individual person, in his whole distinctive peculiarity, points to God's creative activity, as involved in that of Providence (p. 403), and does so all the more the higher the individual stands, the origin of this unique Person above all must be described as a creative act of God, as a miracle in the sense above described (pp. 527 ff.). This is the meaning of the Article "Conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost," a meaning which is clear in its dogmatic import, and of undeniable value. On the other hand, a dogmatic pronouncement as to the "How" of this Divine act, therefore as to the clause, "born of the Virgin Mary," is impossible. For neither the sinlessness of Jesus nor His unique relation to God, is intelligible through His being removed, in the manner indicated, from connexion with the race; unless marriage is declared to be in itself sinful, a view which is contrary to the esteem for this natural arrangement of the Deity, which is cherished by Christians as enlightened by the Gospel. As regards the sinlessness, all will admit this who make it plain to their minds that the disposition to sin would be taken over from another source, from Mary alone, and who yet refuse to be pressed into acceptance of the Romish doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. But in reference to the Sonship to God, even convinced adherents of the old dogma can give their assent, as we find, e.g. in perfectly express terms in the old Commentary of Meyer on Matthew (1864, p. 60), supposing they do not believe themselves to be bound by Matthew I. and Luke I.-III. In other words, it is not from the personal basis of his faith in Christ that the individual will arrive at his decision on this question; as if Christ were obscure, or even of doubtful reality, unless that particular mode of His origin were acknowledged; it is rather from historical reasons, according to one's attitude towards the

two portions above mentioned of the New Testament, which for the rest is silent on the point. But however one judges on the matter, this silence, especially that of the apostle Paul, makes the greatest reserve in any case obligatory, in the interest of faith itself. That can be no foundation of faith which was not a *sine qua non* as an element of the first Christian preaching, and which cannot be shown to have the power of producing faith. This simple principle which was previously established cannot be shaken either by pious or by disputatious people, as they announce conclusions such as we heard, e.g. in the nineties of last century, in the contention about the Apostles' Creed. All the more welcome is the fact that also on the part of the "modern theology of the old faith," such talk as has been indicated regarding the "foundation" of faith was frankly abandoned.

The *Sinlessness* has already been considered when the immediate pronouncements of faith were treated (pp. 622 ff.). We now proceed to determine more particularly the general possibility of a sinless development. Not only have we to remind the reader of the difference between imperfection and sin (pp. 431 ff., 440 ff.), but besides we have now in particular to mark the precise difference there implied between temptation and sin. Temptation occurs when a purpose which is justifiable in itself, a purpose of felt importance, one which is supported by the impulse of nature, comes to be known only by a process of moral reflection as opposed to a higher moral purpose which is attainable by the moral personality at the moment in question; consequently as one which, in spite of the impulse referred to, should be checked. Such temptation is not sin; or to speak more precisely, the inner tension necessarily arising in consequence, which may unhesitatingly be

called a conflict, is not sin. Sin arises from the temptation, this conflict becomes sin, when the decision in favour of the good that is possible at the moment for the person concerned is not made, or is made too late; the latter case occurring, when the inner conflict lasts longer than is right, i.e. longer than the time which allows of a decision that is really moral. The narrative of the conflict in Gethsemane is a specially clear example of this. If the conception of sinlessness is defined in this way, a sinless development may with a good conscience be affirmed in the case of Jesus; but, as is self-evident, we must presuppose that origin of His Personality which was referred to, and also that there were favourable conditions among the people to whom the preparatory Revelation was made, and in the bosom of a God-fearing family. This is just what is presupposed everywhere in the New Testament (cf. Gal. iv. 4). But as to the nature of His temptations, we find indications there which are quite intelligible to us, from His unique consciousness of His Sonship and of His vocation (Mat. iv., xvi., xxvi.), and which make the expression "in all points tempted like as we are" clear to our minds. It is really the sorest temptation that He overcame. Only He could be visited by the sorest, and only He could overcome it; the temptation, namely, to employ the highest religious advantage in a manner which was opposed to religion, to desire to be the Son of God in a manner different from what the Father willed. (Cf. pp. 622 ff.).

In regard to the *State of Exaltation*, all the supporters of the anthropocentric Christology have not expressed themselves in the same unqualified terms. Those who do so have the New Testament on their side, when they give effect to the Pauline conception of the spiritual Head, and point out that we exceed

the limits of our discernment, if we seek to set bounds to the measure of what is possible for Christ, when we contemplate Him as Exalted, as received into the glory of the Father; only the one limit which is insisted on throughout the New Testament, subordination to the Father (1 Cor. xv. 28), requiring to be adhered to. On the other hand, little gain was derived from this, when others made the idea of the central Personality the starting-point for bold speculation. In that case there is far too great danger of losing what faith must not lose,—the real Son of God and Son of man.

While *Ritschl* in some measure enters less into the special questions which were last mentioned than do other theologians of this group, it is his chief merit that he investigated the question of the whole *religious significance* of such a Person, more deliberately than the others. If this is not done, the suspicion is easily raised, that the man who was of unique piety is made the object of faith without obvious reason. For Ritschl, however, the perfect oneness with God which Jesus manifested in His religion, is a means for the purpose of realizing the Kingdom of God, viz. as being the perfect Revelation which God makes of Himself. "In the activity of Jesus in His vocation, directed as it was to the Kingdom of God, the same acts of love and patience are both manifestations of the grace and truth which are essential to God Himself, and evidences of sovereignty over the world." In this statement, Ritschl holds that there is an answer included to the question which never received justice from Orthodoxy,—the question, in what way we arrive at faith in Christ: we do so inasmuch as Christ Himself produces the impression upon us of being a Revelation of God, and thereby, in one and the same act, awakens trust in Himself and so in God; or awakens trust in God, and along with it

trust in Himself. Indeed, even the truest adherent of the old Christology could recognize that it is unable to show plainly enough, in what way Christ calls forth faith in Himself. To point to the mysterious working of the Holy Spirit, however justifiable this may be, is in the present connexion really an evasion of the question, not an answer. Now, while fully conscious of the work he spent on the fundamental problem, touching the question why our faith in God is faith in Christ, and how we arrive at it, Ritschl believed himself justified in claiming for Christ, as he conceived Him, the old title of Divinity,—just because "the essential attributes of God, according to the Christian idea of Him," are clearly apparent through Christ's work and suffering. And it was precisely against this claim that the charge of false coinage was raised, for the most part; all the more, because those other supporters of the anthropocentric view had oftener avoided the expression Divinity of Christ, than laid stress on it. Furthermore, Ritschl's statement that it must be shown that the Divinity of Christ is capable of being transferred to His Church, was, to say the least, very liable to be misunderstood. Luther's well-known expositions of the manner in which Christ makes us kings and priests, and indeed "Christs," have as their presupposition the unqualified recognition of His uniqueness; and this Ritschl puts in the background in the present connexion, more than the expositions which form the basis of his conclusions would have required.

The Modern Adherents of the Theory of Kenosis

The statements regarding Christ which were given forth by the group that was last considered, represent

Him as so pre-eminent, that the question is suggested whether consistency of thought does not oblige them to go further, to get away again from the framework of the anthropocentric system, and back to the old *Trinitarian* basis of Christology. It is this consideration that enables us to form the most just estimate of the essays of the "Church" theology (pp. 116 f.) which succeeded Schleiermacher, instead of seeing in them only a renewal of activity in the sphere of ecclesiastical politics. For these theologians aim at recognizing and maintaining, on their part, the results of Schleiermacher's teaching. There was much that contributed to the formation of that purpose—a deeper acquaintance with the Reformation, with Luther's prophetic insight as he connected salvation with the Saviour, but most of all the silent influence of the New Testament so often alluded to. It was perfectly obvious that Jesus, as He appears in it, was not accurately construed by the old theory: even in the class who heard not without misgiving allusion made to the "historical Christ," there was an unwillingness to abandon His historical reality, as they yielded to the influence of historical research, and still more as they gained a new consciousness of the value which the real Jesus possesses for faith. Two courses were open for the attempt to give effect once more to the Trinitarian background of Christology; an attempt which we can understand for the reason we have stated. From the nature of the case, both must start with that one possibility which was not yet represented in theology so far, namely the limitation of the perfection of the Divine nature, the reference to it of the idea of Kenosis.

In the LUTHERAN Church this attempt was made by starting with the unity of the Person (pp. 677 ff.). In

order that it may be affirmed, the emptying is referred with resolute decision to the Divine Logos, the second Person of the Trinity. In the Formula of Concord this continued to appear horrible blasphemy; for according to it, the immutability of God, in the sense of the early Church, was firmly established. But now, as the reality exhibited by Jesus in the New Testament was seriously contemplated, it was decided to make this venture—in the Incarnation the eternal Logos empties Himself of His Divine attributes. In this matter, some think only of the attributes which have what is known as a transitive reference (pp. 491, 499 ff.), expressing relations to the world or the Divine position in the world, especially omnipotence and omniscience; so the majority held, e.g. Thomasius, Luthardt, Frank, Schaeder. Others include in the kenosis the immanent attributes as well, and teach that the Logos "abdicates His power, and becomes the germ of a human soul," Gess being the boldest of this class. The purpose aimed at, that of getting a really human self-consciousness, is fulfilled at all events only by this bold speculation. The other gets no farther than a grouping together of contradictory expressions, as in the case of Frank—"a transmutation of the consciousness of eternal Sonship into the form of human consciousness which progresses in time, and could be in a human mind the consciousness of eternal Sonship". But the first form, which speaks of the "abdication of His power by the Logos, and His becoming the germ of a human soul" will always be obliged to answer the question how it can show more "Divinity" in the earthly, historical Christ, than the adherents of the anthropocentric view themselves possess. We say nothing at all of the fact that this "orthodoxy" is most severely condemned by the "orthodox" Church. In this connexion we have truly an irony of

history when not a few, especially, too, men of note in ecclesiastical politics, boast of their kenotic Christology as orthodox, and judge others by the Formula of Concord which destroys their own position.

Others, leaning on the Nestorian Christology, or the EARLY REFORMED as the case may be, and therefore finding the point of departure not so much in the unity of the Person as in the Natures, speak of the Divine Logos gradually communicating Himself to the man Jesus, whom He prepared for Himself by His creative power,—to the growing, human self-consciousness of Jesus. It is maintained that the unity of the Person is not the beginning, but the outcome, of the development—so Dorner taught. But do not the two fall asunder even in the completed issue, the consciousness of the eternal Logos, and the human consciousness of Jesus when perfectly one with God? Or if the Logos is regarded as not personal in the strict sense, this objection no doubt disappears, but then there is no advantage compared to the anthropocentric Christology: the Trinitarian background is an empty phrase. Similar objections may be raised also to the essay of Kaehler in which we have a specially full and masterly exposition of Biblical matter, supposing he does not consider the Trinitarian background, simply as such, to be a mystery which cannot be further elucidated: in the latter case the argument applies to which we turn in closing, one based on general considerations. Here we may make mention further of Schaeder, who has "a doctrine of kenosis without the substructure of the doctrine of the two Natures". The Father ordained that the eternal Personality of the Son should become man: "there is a transformation by God's almighty power of the mode of existence of the Logos". But surely that is no longer a kenosis of the Logos? And in that case what is

left of the idea of an actual Revelation of God Himself in history?

Conclusion

Looking back upon the long course which has been traversed, we have a lively impression of the fact, that not one of these systems of Christology is in conformity with the New Testament declarations which were previously treated, and the general sense of which we kept in view in seeking to determine the immediate pronouncements of faith; but we also feel that none of them is wholly unconnected with the New Testament. Hence a final question arises at this point, where of course we are no longer concerned with the immediate pronouncements of faith. Should the declarations of the New Testament which were not expressly dealt with at the former stage,—i.e. in the main, the expressions which not only describe the Person of the Redeemer by His historical work on earth, and on the ground of it by His continued eternal activity, but also trace Him back, humanly speaking, to the eternal life of God,—should these be held fast as being of importance for faith; though no longer as another starting-point for a train of speculation, which, as we have been convinced, is a failure, but rather as conceptions that mark the limit of the knowledge which we have of faith? And further, could this be for us the permanent significance of the formula of the early Church? In order to answer this question, we must recall to our minds the relevant New Testament matter which has not yet been considered, and then inquire whether it can be comprised in a definite statement; and thereafter examine its religious value, whatever that may be, and the logical ground on which it rests.

Faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God

In many of the declarations made by the *Church of the earliest age* as to its faith, the *idea of Pre-existence*—we mean the idea of real existence prior to that on earth ; for this alone is what we now speak of, not an ideal existence in the eternal counsel of God's love—appears, not on some occasions only, but as a generally recognized, undisputed presupposition. Now undoubtedly this very circumstance, that it does not require to be defended from attack as a novelty, and likewise the numerous expressions for the idea (the pre-existent Christ, the Word, Image, Son of God, the Man from heaven), point to historical connexions with the Palestinian and the Alexandrian theology. In the last decade, as is well known, this affinity has been most thoroughly investigated, and there has been an extension moreover to the immeasurable sphere of religious syncretism. However, if it be inferred from this, that the assertion of the pre-existence of Jesus is one which we can easily understand, that it is the necessary result of the general religious thought of the period, there are two things which would not be sufficiently taken into account. In the first place, it is by no means the case that existing conceptions are simply put in application. Even if we pay no attention at all to the uncertain date of those very passages in the Apocalyptic literature which are of the first importance, and to a kind of vagueness and indecision which is shown by them in some respects, yet, for one thing, all the statements regarding the pre-existence of Jesus are of fuller import ; and again, they are connected with each other in a way that was never known before, e.g. the pre-existent Messiah with the eternal Word, and with the Image of God, or heavenly Wisdom. In the next place (and this is much more important, for on the previous matter, from the nature of the sources and from the nature of the case,

the pros and cons are endless), it must never be forgotten, that it is not at all the same thing to identify oneself with a speculation, and to make it apply to an actual historical person with whom people had continued "to eat and drink"; and this contention has double force, where the consciousness of the community was sensitively monotheistic in its heart of hearts. Then again we have the character of this historical person regarding whom that supreme assertion was made, a character so sharply defined in its content, being in short one which was purely ethical and religious.

If all this is borne in mind, the idea of pre-existence seems at all events to be no detached and isolated point in the early Christian assertions as to Christ, but is closely associated with the matter we have already discussed,—with the whole testimony regarding Jesus as the Lord, who, being exalted to the right hand of God, continues to exercise His personal power in His Kingdom, and will perfect it as Judge.

In pursuing such reflections, one turns eagerly from the testimony of the Church of the earliest age, to the *testimony of Jesus regarding Himself.* Now without doubt, there are no unambiguous assertions of pre-existence found in the Synoptics. Those in John (VIII. 58; XVII. 5) seem to many to be most easily understood in their peculiar significance, if they refer to original recollections. And the striking application of the phrase "Son of Man," one which occurs more rarely in the fourth Gospel, in connexion with the idea of pre-existence, may raise the question, whether separate sayings of the Son of Man in the Synoptics do not also include it, as those certainly hold to be possible, who lay stress on the various connexions which the idea of the pre-existence of the Messiah shows with history (Baldensperger). One who considers something like

this probable, whether he conceives of the consciousness in the case specifically in the form of a brooding conviction, at particular moments of inspiration, or as a permanent, mysterious background of thought, will only be confronted all the more surely by the question, how a real, historical person could have ventured to believe anything so extraordinary about himself. The historical associations could plainly have been viewed by himself, even more than they were by the Church, only as a connecting medium, not as a sufficient cause.

Now in that case, we are led back again to the unique consciousness of Sonship which Jesus possessed, the historical reality of which, as well as its value for faith, engaged our attention when we were not yet considering the ultimate presuppositions, but the immediate pronouncements of our faith. We have to recall the truth that with much more effect than particular expressions in their isolation can have, the personal relation of Jesus to God's sovereignty in general, is the beginning and the completion of it. And His whole position in that respect is the more noteworthy that, while putting Himself so unmistakably above all others on the side of God, He affirms His subordination to the Father in the most deliberate and emphatic manner, precisely in the same connexions in which He points out the unique rank He holds as Son.

From the vantage-ground of the situation we have reached, there is now the possibility of bringing to a close a train of thought which we formerly started, though the importance of it is only at this point brought fully to light. When we were dealing with the trustworthiness of the history of Jesus, so far as faith in Him requires it to be taken into consideration (pp. 216 ff.), the extreme improbability that His figure is a creation of faith was set forth. But now, at the close

of the subject of Christology, where we inquire as to the right,—or the duty,—of formulating ultimate propositions which sum up the faith of Christians in Christ, the question which was previously treated comes before us once more, and now in the whole significance which it possesses: it is brought forward in connexion with the solution attempted by the "History of Religion," an attempt which we described on that former occasion as the most serious that is made. For it alone grasps the problem in all its depth and precision—"the contemporary of Augustus in the character of the Holy One of God"; the Lord who was rich beyond all that call upon Him, the Image of the invisible God, regarded as having come from heaven to earth, as now received into the glory of the Father, and as coming again in the same. This faith is incomparable in its content and serious import, unrivalled by the worship accorded to a Roman emperor or by the reverence for Buddha. This faith did not spring up gradually, but, however varied in its details, existed in the earliest period of the Church, appearing when the Church appeared, forming the ground of its existence as a religious community. However much a Paul may himself have contributed to it, to the shaping of it, it was yet found in existence by him, in its essential core, as a recognized, undisputed, peculiar possession of those that "in all places call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours". And now we have the solution which is offered by the History of Religion. Because of this early, prevalent, uncontradicted faith in Christ, it is said, the image of Christ must have been a previously existing *datum*. Jesus supplied a name for the myth, for the drama of redemption which, under the most manifold forms, occupied men's minds: what previously belonged to the Christ, to Dionysos, Attis, Mithras,

Adonis, Osiris, was transferred to Jesus. The religious esteem for Jesus can be understood from the general temper of that great, unique epoch in the sphere of religion; "the Christianity of Paul and John is a syncretistic religion". The native soil is formed by Oriental Gnosis ultimately, and by syncretistic Judaism in the first instance, for yearning reflection on mystical union with heavenly Beings that descend to earth and reascend, having many names, but occasioning an inextinguishable longing for redemption. And it is held that there is no degradation of Jesus in this account which is given of His deification. On the contrary,— the multitude of gods and heroes, conceived on the principles of naturalism, who, in spite of isolated traits of a lofty species, were essentially ideals of humanity in its natural selfishness, had to give place to the One Lord, who is the ideal of the moral man, of free obedience and of love. For Israelitish religion, when it had blossomed out in full, was wedded to that religious product of the rest of the world which was mentioned: Christianity is the necessary result of the development of the religious spirit of our race (cf. Gunkel, *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des Neuen Testaments*, 1903).

But now the supporters of this theory must not only grant, as a general truth, that in our actual knowledge of these matters the greatest lacuna still opens before us, but must expressly admit that the influx of the Gnosis referred to cannot be proved until the second and third generation. And yet all depends on the proof for the origin itself, for the first generation of those who believed in Jesus as the Christ. Indeed, one of the advances which we owe to the study of the History of Religion consists just in this, that it dissolves more and more effectively the figment of a Christian

world without faith in Christ, and finds the Gospel proclaimed by Jesus, however much it emphasizes it when contemplating Jesus Himself, already transformed, in the first days of the Church, into a Gospel in which Christ was preached. In addition to this difficulty with reference to time, there is one which, to say the least, is surely as serious with reference to the content of the new syncretistic religion. As a leading, essential feature of the Gnosis alluded to, the retirement of God, of the highest God, is emphasized, undoubtedly with good reason; while the heavenly, spiritual figure of the Redeemer, who acts for Him, moves into the foreground. In consonance with this, His redeeming work is in the main redemption from the burden of transitoriness, although as regards details ethical features are combined with that. We find nothing of this in Pauline Christianity. Christ, as Paul regards Him, is not placed between us and the God who is remote, does not conceal God; rather, in Christ He has really come quite close to us, has become in the Son a Father of sons, who experience in prayer an intimacy of communion, the expression of which, in the eighth chapter of Romans, e.g. could not be surpassed. And this sonship is essentially of an ethical kind, implying redemption from the guilt and power of sin; however certain it is that this is completed only by deliverance from the "body of death". It may be replied in the first instance that, as we recollect, the Israelitish element was mentioned by us above in express and emphatic terms, and that, by means of it, the idea of the remoteness of God, as taught by Gnosticism, was discarded by the new syncretistic system. But is that element adequate for such a purpose, when the Gospel proclaimed by Jesus, and the syncretistic Christianity of Paul, have previously been described by opposite

forms of statement—Jesus giving "a summons which is rooted in the most pronounced religious individualism," and Paul announcing "a system of superhuman facts of Redemption" (Wrede)? Would not the significance of Jesus Himself require to be differently estimated, as regards the content of His work, and therefore also the power of His work, for the purpose of rendering intelligible the fusion with that temper of the age which was spoken of, and so that "syncretistic Christianity of Paul"? In thus reflecting on the difficulties which the new solution presents to one who is prepared to think it out, let us now recall the starting-point, from which we were led to that solution once more, at the present stage of our inquiry, viz. the essential connexion which we found between those statements of the New Testament about Jesus Christ which are even the most sublime in their import, and what we discussed long since,—and only recall to our minds anew at this point,—as the testimony of Jesus regarding Himself in the Synoptics, in conjunction with the whole impression produced by His image. We ask whether the fact of Pauline Christianity, and of primitive Christianity in general, cannot be much more exactly conceived and much more easily understood from the point of view of the connexion in question, than from the factors presupposed above,—on the one hand, the moral imperative of Jesus, as rooted in the most pronounced religious individualism, and on the other hand, the myth of redemption. And now when we go on to assert, as against this latest tendency of thought, that this depreciation of the image of Christ which is presented in the Synoptics is not due to purely historical considerations, but to the influence of a particular conception of Evolution, we have less reason to fear the charge of being prejudiced, when that conception has

not proved a key to the problem before us. At the same time, the relative value of such an investigation in the sphere of the history of religion is in no way belittled; perhaps it will really be capable of throwing light on many points of detail, among others on the very question of the full development of the Pauline Christology. But the innermost religious kernel of that Christology, the *faith in Christ* which we spoke of, *which the Christian world did not create, but which created the Christian world,* becomes more intelligible, if it is the answer designed by Jesus to His living word, to what He did in speaking, acting, suffering, conquering; and if the syncretistic influences, whether they are greater or less than we moderns are able to measure, are placed in the light which emanates from Galatians IV. 4. For indeed the longing for redemption which was mentioned is a divinely intended result of the history of humanity in the pre-Christian age; and the element of truth in it is taken up into Christianity, but is transformed at its core by the Revelation of Himself, which the God who alone is good made in Jesus for man's Redemption. Applied in this sense, the saying that "Christianity is a hymn chanted by history in honour of Jesus," might have more convincing power.

By this circuitous path, which was rendered necessary by the matter in hand, we have returned to the point we started from. None of the theories as to the ultimate presuppositions of faith in Christ agrees precisely with the declarations of the New Testament in their loftiest reach; but for all of them, we may find connecting links with the latter. In this fact there is involved the question which was put forward above—Are we to hold fast by the ultimate, farthest-reaching declarations of the New Testament, as a limiting con-

ception which was providentially supplied in the development of the Church, so that we may lose no part of the mystery of God's Revelation of His love in Christ, till a fuller knowledge of it is opened up in other conditions of existence? This question is not a factitious one, because each of the theories which were set forth was found to be not free from objection, both from the side of faith and of knowledge; and yet, on the other hand, the propositions which are of immediate value for faith, and also intelligible to Christian thought, rise, in the last resort, to a height which seems to point beyond themselves. As the result of our latest inquiry, however, this question is still more strongly suggested, and farther removed at the same time from the sphere of immediate, saving faith; so that we can attempt to discuss it as one which is as far as may be objective.

That LIMITING CONCEPTION, as it was called, might perhaps be thus formulated by those who approve of it. The love of God which was effective for us in Christ as the Son, is so truly the love of God, the effective Revelation which He makes of His own nature, that it is eternally bestowed on Him, the Bringer of this eternal love, not only in the sense of ideal pre-existence, not only on Him as the correlative in the world's history of the eternal love of God, but also, apart from His earthly existence, as the love of the Father to the Son in the mystery of the eternal life of God, and therefore, as no other word is available for us, in a state of real pre-existence. And as the other aspect of the same conception, this Son who is eternally loved by God, though sent to the world by the Father, likewise came to the world by the prompting of His own love. In viewing this matter, we would have the greatest freedom as to details; e.g. in preferring either the Johannine or the Pauline cast of thought and expression. God's

Word was with God ; the Word was made flesh. Or, God spared not his own Son ; for our sakes He became poor ; He emptied Himself. And in both cases, too, it would have to be stated here in express terms, how much changed are all the conditions of our knowledge under which such statements as these last are hazarded. For even among those who approve of them, there can be no question that, when once the unique significance of Jesus for faith is presupposed, those statements which are most sublime in their import were much more naturally suggested to the Church of the earliest period than to us, that they found links of connexion with the general consciousness which are wanting with us. One can easily be convinced of this, e.g. by a consideration of 1 Corinthians VIII. 5-7. Furthermore, those who deliberately uphold the New Testament statements about pre-existence, should not close their minds to the observation that even in Philippians II. the consideration of time is really subordinated in the last resort to that of quality, though it is certain that the former, too, is seriously meant.

The *religious value* of this limiting conception will be described as follows by those who accept it. The love of the Father which causes the Son to be sent, seems to them to be rendered still more impressive, as does the humble self-devotion of the Son ; the truths connected with the sacred seasons of Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter seem to become more vivid and adorable. They may rejoice too at the continuity in which they stand with the historical development, however far they are or should be from identifying their position with any particular Christology of the past.

Those who favour the conception may assert the *logical warrant* for it, in proportion as they deal seriously with the fact that it is really a limiting conception, one

which transcends the power of our knowledge; this being understood in the sense of the Theory of Knowledge maintained by the Critical Philosophy, a theory which does not arbitrarily assign limits to knowledge, but recognizes them as found in knowledge itself. In that case they believe that this limiting conception of theirs is not touched by the objections discussed above, which were brought forward against the theocentric Christology. For the twofold question which was treated by the old theocentric Christology, as to how the Divine element in Christ is related to God, and how it is related to the human element, sprang up on totally different soil, viz. under the supposition that our intellectual power is capable of dealing with it. They themselves, on the contrary, will draw attention, as regards the former question, to the unknowableness of the inner life of the Godhead, and as regards the latter, to the mystery of our own human consciousness in its ultimate depths; and in both cases, to the one great enigma of Time, in which the problem of the relation between the Infinite Spirit and the finite is brought to our consciousness in the most direct manner (pp. 504 ff.). Recognizing these new conditions of knowledge, they can also regard their closing word in Christology as a resumption of the Christian doctrine of God and of Christology as existing prior to the Apologists, as Loofs has expounded the matter in the history of dogma; namely before the direct influence of Platonic conceptions on these articles of theology, before the amalgamation of the personal God of holy love with the idea of the Absolute, and before the image of the Person of Jesus Christ, which had appeared as a unity, was contemplated from the point of view of the two opposite Natures. Other parallel cases from the history of dogma likewise present themselves, though without somewhat pre-

cise treatment they are liable to be misunderstood. For example, the undeniable fact that living faith in Christ, while varying very much in details, always preferred to express itself in the language of John, would be unjustly brought under suspicion by raising the cry of Modalistic Christology. How little that would necessarily signify, we may often be convinced by taking concrete cases; for instance, when very stringent critics, unaware of contradiction, represent the religious confessions of a J. S. Bach, in his Oratorios of the Passion, as a Protestant rendering of forms which were handed down from ancient times.

A system of theology which does not mean to exhaust its matter with confessions of the individual, of which both the value and the defects are obvious, but at the same time would not want to identify itself with any historical formulation, nor with the letter of particular statements of Scripture, desiring rather to give expression to the religious interpretation of the Gospel which is attainable at the period when it is framed, is unable, owing to the greatness of the subject, to close with a hasty, cut-and-dry SETTLEMENT of this question. It can justify the recognition of the limiting conception which has been described, against the charge of a sacrifice of intellect, and of an acceptance of the faith of others (*fides implicita*), for the reasons and under the conditions indicated, while one's personality remains untouched. But it must likewise insist that those who sincerely believe in this limiting conception shall not make the acceptance of it an essential element of saving faith itself, but shall rather leave open the possibility that, in the progress of knowledge with regard to the Christian salvation, it may be superseded. The ultimate reason for this attitude is discovered in the

nature of evangelical saving faith, as personal trust in the Revelation which God has made of Himself. Thus the recognition of the conception in question can only have that amount of warrant and worth, which it acquires from the fact that, according to the conviction of the individual, it is for him the final and the best expression of this saving faith, the nature and content of which we came to know long before there was any thought of these presuppositions and inferences.

There remains thus, as the chief *task of Christology*, that of grasping with increasing precision, and establishing with increasing clearness, the immediate utterances of faith which have been dealt with,—especially as against that Relativism of the modern idea of Evolution, which brings everything to one level. Even already, faith in Christ has benefited by the conflict with this its greatest foe. We begin again to discover more clearly why, as a matter of principle, apart from all special circumstances in the life of the individual and of the community, Christianity without faith in Christ is no Christianity at all, and what incomparable value is possessed by this faith in God's full Revelation of Himself in Christ, precisely as contrasted with the idea of an evolution of which the ultimate aim is hidden from us, an idea which, in spite of all appearance of superiority, is in the last resort unmeaning. But we also learn more clearly how well supported this faith is on its foundation in the history of Jesus, which does actually supply what is of value in very truth, and which, in disclaiming infallibility, and that Divinity which is but of man's device—though this relinquishment seems at first questionable—proves to have genuine reality, as being history in which the living God is involved, and not the dream of fanciful thought bearing the semblance of piety.

Result

Proceeding on this path, and working with a distinct object in view, all those will learn to understand each other, with no prejudice to truth, and to their own profit, who are united in their faith in Christ, but think differently as regards those ultimate presuppositions and inferences. Perhaps they will continue for long to be indispensable to each other. For in the common conflict in defence of the perfect, personal, self-revelation of God, some may have more success in enforcing the element expressed by the terms "perfect" and "self" and others in pleading for the "Revelation"; and yet it is a personal self-revelation, only if both factors receive their due. Being united in the aim referred to, they could and should be less disposed to fall out by the way. The more they are united in the chief matter, in faith, the less would they require to doubt the faith of others; and the less importance, for that very reason, should they assign to their affirmation or their denial, with reference to what is not so valuable and so well assured. Being freed from the loss of power which quarrelling among those who belong to a common fellowship always implies, the Church of those who believe in Christ would then exercise more power, in attracting and winning men who have not yet come to a decision; the faith of these believers would produce the impression, that they have cause for belief which is felt with thankfulness, not, as is now so often the case, that the will has been forcibly constrained to express belief. Those who do not yet have faith in Christ would be able, even apart from the facility thus afforded for their advance from the Fore-court to the Holy Place, if only they are of the truth, to benefit more sincerely and joyfully from the general work of Jesus Christ in the Fore-court itself,—because they would not feel oppressed by the requirement, that they should hold a faith that is

unintelligible to them. The others again whom we think of themselves, those who have faith in Christ,—including all the schools, without prejudice to their particular aptitudes, all being invited rather to a noble rivalry,—finding themselves tired of mere negations, would join together in a real, positive affirmation, and would endeavour in common to sound its depth " which passeth knowledge " (Eph. III. 19),—*adoring God whose love was truly self-sacrificing, in that He gave His all* (Rom. VIII. 32 ; John III. 16 ; Matt. V. 45 ff.—cf. XI. 25 ff., and again the primary expression, " I am sent, am come "). For the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is love, such as sympathizes with our need and our sin, *and that in a real way.* " The Divine nature is nothing but pure beneficence," the " eternal power by which faith is produced in us " (Luther). " God can really love only those beings for whom He first required to give up Himself entirely, and all that He is " (Rothe). We can break finally with the conception of God that eliminates this truth : it is not the conception supplied by Revelation. How such a real entrance of God into a real process of history is consistent with His eternity,—that is here as everywhere the one ultimate mystery, and, if the matter is rightly understood, the only one for us men, viewed as growing up in time, and therefore also for the " theology of pilgrims " (pp. 504 ff.). When this truth shall have become increasingly self-evident, the adoration of the self-sacrificing love of God which was alluded to will further engender new forms of knowledge in Christology. Then it will again be possible to speak in more unqualified terms, because more truthfully, because no claims are made that cannot be satisfied, of the unity of God and Jesus Christ ; and to deal with entire seriousness with the fundamental principle of all religion, and of ours in the most profound personal

sense—God in man, and man in God. Then, too, a view of the history of Christological dogma may show, with more joyful effect than we moderns are privileged to experience, seeing that we often note the burden rather than the power of that dogma, that real faith has been a common possession everywhere ; and for that very reason may enable people generally to describe a past form as past, and to do so in more unqualified terms than they use at present.

FAITH IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The *Reformation* was in its very origin a rediscovery and fresh apprehension of the third article of Faith. "How do I find a gracious God?" it asked; and its answer was—Through faith in the Gospel, in Christ. Assurance of Salvation is experienced as the result of putting one's trust upon God's grace in Christ. It is no longer sought in ways which do not lead directly to the result, in submission to mysterious doctrines of God, and in the receiving of mysterious sacraments such as the organized ecclesiastical institute of grace guarantees and administers. God is now real in Christ, and this real God in Christ is in the community of believers, in the whole Christian world which accepts the Gospel: that world is "full of the Holy Spirit" (cf. Luther's hymn: "Dear Christian people all rejoice"). It is the living presence of the revelation of salvation which God has made in Christ, that faith extols with gratitude, when it makes the confession—"I believe in the Holy Spirit". This new, and at the same time primitive, original, but long concealed sense of the belief in the Holy Spirit, not as acceptance of one amongst other articles of the Creed, but as a personal, divinely induced, saving trust in the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is clearly expressed in Luther's explanation. Faith comes not from our own reason or strength; it is God's doing in the Christian community by means of the Gospel, and its content is forgiveness of sins, and

therein life and blessedness till the Last Day. The fifth article of the Augsburg Confession is in the same sense. "For the attainment of such faith, God has ordained the preaching office, given the Gospel and the Sacraments, through which as through means, He gives the Holy Spirit, who, when and where He will, produces faith in those who hear the Gospel, which teaches that we through the merit of Christ, not through our own merit, find a gracious God, provided we believe so." Here we have all the subjects which fall to be treated under this section mentioned in their inner connexion,—the Christian saving faith defined, and represented as the work of the Holy Spirit, accomplished in the Church, by means of the Word, when and where He will.

The *theologians of our Church* have had so little regard to this impulse of the Reformation in the presentation of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, that it might with reason be said that this doctrine is the one most neglected. For instance, Luther expressly stated that knowledge of the nature of the Holy Spirit belonged to Eternity: it belonged to theology on earth to understand His operation; "He is that by which the Father through Christ and in Christ rules all things and makes all things alive". In contrast to that, orthodox Dogmatics treated of His nature in the doctrine of the Trinity without reference to His operation, which was dealt with later under the heading "Of appropriating Grace," with some such connecting clause as, "the work of redemption being completed, there is required still for its appropriation a special supernatural power". Compare with this what Luther says in his Catechism: this "supernatural power" is more in place in a Roman manual of faith. To take another example. Though with much variation in detail, Luther

in principle defined the relation of the Spirit to the Word on the one hand, and to the community to which the Word was entrusted on the other, so that by the first phrase stress has to be laid on the immediate nature of the Divine operation, by the second, on the importance of the historical revelation; but dogmatic theologians did not clearly maintain this distinction, one so important for the life of faith. We shall have to pronounce a similar judgment on their definitions of predestination, grace and freedom, etc. In especial, the effect of the Holy Spirit in the Word, viz. saving faith, was not explained in accordance with the great accession of insight: in this respect the doctrine of the scheme of salvation particularly was fraught with evil consequences.

Following the article of the Augsburg Confession already cited, we distinguish as is required on intrinsic grounds, simply between the *operation* of the Holy Spirit and the *effect*, i.e. the Assurance of Salvation through Faith. As regards the effect, we assign all that does not fall under this point of view of assurance of Salvation to be dealt with by Ethics, and present here in the treatment of Dogmatics only the elementary doctrines which lie at the foundation of the Christian Hope; because in the Assurance of Salvation presently experienced, the whole future even under different conditions of existence is guaranteed. The first section however on the operation of the Holy Spirit will naturally have two subjects to treat of—the operation of the Spirit in relation to God and the Church on the one hand (means of Grace, Word and Sacraments); and to the human spirit on the other (the question generally, and Grace and freedom, in particular Predestination). The objection, possible here at the outset, that the distinction of "Operation" and "Effect"

employs the category of cause and effect for a relation to which it does not apply, it is hoped that the exposition itself will remove. And merely to obviate any misunderstandings which might arise in advance, we may point to the fact that while our division of the Doctrine of the Spirit is not made parallel to that of Christology, this is simply due to the difference in the subject which is treated.

THE OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Operation of the Holy Spirit in relation to God and to the Church

The Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God and of Christ

In this part of Dogmatics it is especially necessary to set forth as plainly as possible what is of importance for faith, without the slightest regard in the first instance for possible difficulties such as crop up in tradition. For example, the question as to the personality of the Holy Spirit can only cause trouble when taken up first. Not only does it distract attention from the main point, but it confuses the life of faith, which everywhere and always will only, and can only, have to do with the one living God. We Protestants, apt though we are to charge our Roman fellow-Christians with reverence for the magical, often fail to see that with regard at least to the operation of the Holy Spirit, many amongst us move in a sphere of thought which is hardly free from the same reproach. Or it may be that they are open to this reproach because they do not reflect on the matter at all. For this, the unjustifiable emphasis which in many expositions of the Catechism is laid on the question of the Personality of the Spirit,

is in part at least responsible. Another hindrance to a clear doctrine of the Holy Spirit lies in the fact that it is often said that "we obtain the Holy Spirit through faith, in particular through believing prayer"; and likewise that "we obtain faith through the Holy Spirit". Both statements may be true; but the underlying reason for the consistency of the two at first sight contradictory propositions should be made clear.

Paul furnishes us with an easily intelligible starting-point in 1 Corinthians II. 10 ff., though the passage certainly contains other things which do not concern us here. He illustrates the operation of the Spirit of God by the working of the human spirit. Now what do we mean in the intercourse of man with man, when we say that one has the spirit of another? We always mean two things. First, that the thoughts, resolves, feelings of the one are determined in their nature by those of the other; in short that the content of his inner life is determined by that of the other, is dependent upon it. In the second place, however, we emphasize this "dependence," as we in the first instance emphasized the content, and lay stress upon the fact that there has been an influence of the one upon the other. Now it requires no detailed demonstration that it was simply this that the early Christians meant, when they experienced the operation of the Holy Spirit in their own life. The two sides of our leading thought do, however, require closer definition.

This is not so necessary with regard to the first-mentioned point, namely the content of the spiritual operation. Many single phrases of the New Testament do indeed imply special remarkable acts of God in the believers. But it is just in respect to these acts that we find an affinity with what was and still is real in the sphere of the religious life elsewhere, apart from Christ.

The main thing, the essentially new thing, on the other hand, is that man can have the mind of God, can be like Him in love and thus be blessed; and this as having been first loved by Him. We should have to repeat all that has been already said regarding God, the Divine image in man, and Christ. But the matter is clear, and one must simply be on one's guard against looking for the expression Holy Spirit in every passage in which His operation is spoken of: especially in the sayings of Jesus in the first Gospels the expression seldom occurs. More immediately does the other side of the truth which we mentioned require explanation, namely that this content of the Divine life becomes the content of our life by the work of God; that though what we refer to is our most intimate personal possession, yet that possession is produced in us by God Himself. For in communion with God, in the converse with Him which His love opens up to us, we cannot content ourselves at all with the thought that God is the operating cause. No doubt it would be as absurd here as anywhere else to desire to know how the operation is produced, so to say. But because in faith we have personally to do with the personal God, we must at least so far explain this "personal," that no essential element of the faith-process suffers damage. Among us this explanation has never yet become self-evident. Of course there is no doubt of this, even in the present connexion, that this operation is mediated by Christ; else the whole historical character of our religion would be depreciated, as has been done by the fanatics. Many, however, think that they are certain to escape the danger of fanaticism, only if they believe that the operation of the Divine Spirit has been sufficiently defined,—when on the one hand this mediation for it in history, and on the other the psychological mediation, are plainly em-

phasized. But as soon as there is any thought of an immediate operation of the Spirit of God alongside of the latter, it is held that we sink without hope of escape into the abysses of obscure mysticism. We shall be in a better position to speak clearly of this expression later, when we come to treat expressly of the influence of the Divine Spirit upon the human. Here it is enough emphatically to assert that by giving up the conviction of the immediate influence of God, there would be a loss of something without which faith cannot live, a loss which often entails the recompense at the present time, that deference is yielded to an infra-Christian mysticism which keeps aloof from history. Luther, though his utterances taken separately are not free from contradictions, appears also on this point as a prophet of the Christian life, when he says: the Spirit writes the word inwardly in the heart; those who hear it are visited also by a flame within them, so that the heart cries out: that is true. Such phrases are by no means merely intended to explain why one person hears and another does not, and therefore to elucidate the differences in the effect of the Word in this respect, the enigma which is a root of the doctrine of Predestination; but apart altogether from that, Luther in these words gives clear expression to the fundamental experience of faith, that it has to do with God directly.

But some further explanation is required of our leading thought with regard to the operation of the Holy Spirit, a thought which is a unity exhibiting two sides. Let us observe that Paul, in the passage on the Spirit of God already referred to, suddenly substitutes: "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. II. 16). In this single phrase all is said. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ; in the New Testament these two designations are interchangeable. The reason why can-

not be doubtful. Because God's mind, heart, counsel, will, is revealed for us in Jesus, the eternal love has in Him become operative in time. It is sufficient simply to refer to the idea of revelation expounded under Apologetics and Christology. Perhaps, however, it is profitable to call to mind here, as at the beginning of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, that in the New Testament the important truth of which we now speak is not always connected with the phrase, "Spirit of Christ". To its expression belong likewise all those passages which speak of Christ's dwelling in us, or name Him in any way as the content of our new life (e.g. Phil. III. 8 ff.; Rom. VIII. 5 ff.). What has been said up till this point has reference to the fact that the Spirit of God is called the Spirit of Christ, when the content of His operation is considered. But it is called the Spirit of Christ for the further reason that the immediate operation of God which was spoken of is effected by the operation of Christ, is actually revealed through Him. In the Christology too, it will be remembered, we had always to distinguish in the idea of God's Revelation of Himself, the element of God's Revelation *of Himself* in Jesus, and that of His *Revelation* of Himself.

In this connexion it is now clear as a matter of course why we speak of the Holy Spirit. Since in Christ God imparts Himself in a degree unsurpassable, as we have just explained, namely in so far as God makes the content of His spiritual life the content of ours, and in so far as He does this, as the God who is revealed in Christ, immediately in the actual present, it is necessary that God's uniqueness and transcendence be expressed in an equally unequivocal manner, and that too in both respects mentioned. Now for this purpose the word holy serves, as we have already defined it, in its wider and in its narrower sense, in relation

to the world in general, and to the sinful world in particular. Nothing remains to be added here to what has there been already said ; but here it becomes specially clear how indispensable it is that God, who is eternal Love, be also named the Holy one, not in spite of His being Love, but precisely because He is so. The third part of Dogmatics, which tells of the fact that the love of God becomes real in us, must in this point, and precisely in this point, agree with the first and with the second.

We have now arrived at the point at which we can properly speak of the PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. In so far as in what precedes we have been speaking simply of personal activity in the highest conceivable sense of the term, the personality of the Holy Spirit is self-evident. For what sense could otherwise be attached to all these propositions ? But with equal clearness must we say that no statement is made as to whether, in the inner life of Deity, the Holy Spirit is personally distinguished from the Father and the Son. Nothing more was expressed than the blessed assurance that God who in Christ revealed to us His essence as holy Love, by so doing dwells a personal Spirit in our spirits (John), pours out His Spirit on our hearts (Paul), i.e. however the phrases may change, gives us actually to share in a personal way in His love, a love which we can in no higher manner show forth than by the praise of sonship to Him in His kingdom. It is personal communion so full and complete, so incomparably rich and so incomparably intimate, close, and immediate, that all else which we so name appears to us but a hint and shadow of it. But it is always personal communion with the one true God, who is a God of Holy Love. Accordingly, the majority of the New Testament witnesses assert that, inasmuch as the Holy

Spirit of God and of Christ lives and works and rules in us, God and Christ rule and work and live in us ; as all who from of old have by loving study steeped themselves in Romans VIII. and John XIV.-XVI. have testified. If now alongside of that, and most of all in these very chapters, phrases occur which speak of the Holy Spirit as an independent entity alongside the Father and Christ, the reason is clear enough. It is simply that the truly personal communion between God and the believers impels them to use expressions which distinguish the Spirit of God, who is active in a personal manner, from His work in the believers who are personally impressed. The Love of God, as having come to act through man's trust, just because personal reality is concerned, is distinguished from the active Love of God. But while the faithful so speak, it is only to return again immediately to the more exact, fundamental expression ; as the rapid interchange of these pronouncements of original Christianity shows. And it is a matter of vital importance for our evangelical Faith that no doubt be left on this point. Even phrases which in themselves are quite free from objection, as for instance that the Holy Ghost is the guidance and the power of life which springs from God's essential nature, may serve to make it appear that the Holy Spirit is something which stands between God and the believers, and thus obscures the purely personal character of our communion with God in Faith. Now this danger, of course, is not necessarily present wherever the Holy Spirit is distinguished as a separate person in the essential life of Deity ; nor on the other hand is it always absent where that distinction is denied. But in any case we are not here in a position, less even than we were at the conclusion of the Christology, to give a decision on this problem of the inner life of God, from

the knowledge of Revelation which faith immediately possesses ; and we must postpone our conclusion until we have studied the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Christian community in all its aspects.

At this point also we can at least give a similarly provisional answer to the other question which at the outset we characterized as a confusing one,—how far the Holy Spirit is received through FAITH, and yet is understood at the same time to produce faith ? For if what we have already said regarding the Holy Spirit is right, there is included in it the fact that God, personal holy love as manifest in Christ, produces faith, a saving trust in this love of His ; but because it is a matter of personal trust, produces it not after the mode of His operation in nature, but creatively in the manner of the spiritual and moral world. Though this latter thought will require to be more accurately defined, when we come to treat of the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the spirit of man, and of His work, the assurance of Salvation through Faith, so much is already clear that there is no contradiction between the two statements, but that it is only consonant to the peculiar nature of the great process that both be put forward. In their inner unity they are intelligible : if one follows evangelical lines of thought regarding the Holy Spirit, one is led to think similarly of Faith, and conversely.

We must first, however, define clearly our position as to the relation of the Holy Spirit and God by expounding the

Relation of the Holy Spirit to the Church

They are necessarily connected. The Holy Spirit of God is, as we saw, a quite definite entity. His operation cannot be cut loose from the historical revela-

tion, because our religion is not a nature-religion of a higher order, in which the Deity reveals Himself by indefinite emotions in those whom He favours. A historical revelation cannot, however, remain operative without a tradition, without this history being handed down through the ages. The operation of the Holy Spirit cannot therefore be conceived, without a community of people who effectively preserve the memory of that history. More accurately, however, not the memory of this revelation-history merely. This revelation because of its peculiar nature, being a personal revelation of the personal God, cannot be handed down as a collection of statutes or doctrines regarding God and Christ, but rather can remain effective only in the experience of living men who are by it awakened to personal trust. Such a *community of believers, i.e. a Church,* is therefore necessarily implied in the thought of the operation of our God as Holy Spirit.

But now seeing that immediate operation is also contained in the idea of the Holy Spirit (p. 716), the question at once arises, even before we have defined the nature of this community of believers more closely, in what relation we are to think of these two things—*the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Church, and His immediate operation.* Regarding this we can at the outset only say that the act of the Holy Spirit and the act of the Church can neither be regarded as one and the same thing, nor yet can they be outwardly separated; rather, in their union they must be distinguished. Clearly the Roman opinion comes dangerously near identifying the two things: the operation of the Holy Spirit is in essentials equivalent to the operation of the organized Church. In quite a different sense Schleiermacher tends to identify the Holy Spirit and the Church, by allowing the line of distinction between

the spirit pervading the Church and the Holy Spirit of God to become a variable one. Unduly to separate the two is the tendency of the fanatics, who detach the operation of the Spirit from the community of believers, and attribute to the Spirit a sphere of operation over and above the definite content of the historical revelation which is preserved by the community. How the relation is to be rightly defined will become clearer, when we discuss presently the idea of the Church as the community of believers, more accurately of those who believe in the Gospel, the Word of God, the historical self-revelation of God; and when later we come to understand in what sense an immediate operation of the Divine Spirit upon the human spirit must be asserted.

The *crucial point* in the IDEA OF THE CHURCH as it stands in Dogmatics comes most clearly to view, when we remember that this idea has also a rightful place in Ethics, but is regarded there from a totally different point of view. In Ethics, the Church is the association which springs from the impulse to communicate religious gifts. Here arise a multitude of important questions—how the instinct of association comes into play even in this sphere; how the individual stands to the community as giver and receiver; what are the particular spheres of co-operation in religion; how this ordered working with, upon, and for each other, resembles that in other associations, and how it differs; in especial, whether it produces any legal forms, and what they are (cf. Ethics, pp. 435 ff.). All these are questions necessarily to be treated, but, regarded from the point of view we have mentioned, they all fall outside the limits of Dogmatics. Not that in their content they would have to be regarded as altogether alien to Dogmatics. In regard to the question of Church Law for instance, which is of

course of fundamental importance for the Roman conception of the Church, that is by no means the case. And nowhere is there any contradiction between the two ways of treatment. But the point of view in the two cases is entirely different, and properly understood is opposed; the position being that, in accordance with our fundamental definition of the relation of Ethics and Dogmatics, the dogmatic point of view is the superior, as surely as Christianity is the perfectly moral religion, not morality defined in terms of religion. In Dogmatics, the Church is briefly *the association of believers as the product and the instrument of the Holy Spirit;* in this double yet single sense, however, inseparable from belief in the Holy Spirit of God and of Christ, given with the latter, contanied in it, by necessity of faith. Doubtless the word Church often hinders people from accepting the idea which is indispensable. But the substitutes proposed for it, such as Christendom, true Christendom, again awaken other misgivings. Thus the explanation of the word requires to be all the clearer.

Why and in what sense the Church is the effect and instrument of the Holy Spirit, follows from what has been already said. Why is it the effect? If we believe that God has revealed Himself in Christ as almighty, holy Love, then we believe that this love becomes operative in the hearts of men, and in fact that it continually shows itself operative; or more correctly, that He Himself makes it operative. That was really the meaning of the Confession of belief in the Holy Spirit. So far as His operation is personal, however, it would not be completely real, unless it were realized in personal faith, and that too in an association of believers: this follows alike from the conditions of personal life, which leads to association, and from the content of such faith, according to which it is the

association of the children of God in the Kingdom of God. For these reasons, the Church, the association of believers, is the necessary product of the Holy Spirit,—necessary, in the sense of the spiritual world, —of the operative, effective self-revelation of God in Christ. The Pauline phrase, the body of Christ, of which Christ is the head, is only another expression for the same thing; its full meaning is got from the doctrine of the Exalted Christ, and of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. For the very same reason, however, which makes the association of believers the work of the Holy Spirit, this association is also the necessary instrument of the Holy Spirit; and as such necessary instrument, that work falls to be considered here. For how else than through living persons who have laid hold on God's love in faith, should this love become real as a personal influence in other, ever changing individual men, without being something utterly different from what it is; i.e. other than the personal revelation of the love of the personal God? Or what is the same thing in other words—Christ the head, by the service of the members of His body, continually brings into the organism new elements of the spiritual world which have not yet been incorporated, so that the body grows to Divine stature (Col. II. 19.).

These two points, that the Church is the product and likewise the instrument of God's activity, cannot be separated from one another. That is a fact inexhaustible in its sublimity. It is useful, however, to point out that in this present connexion, while using the word "product" in the sense in which it is here employed, we are not gliding over to the second section of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. For just so far as the Church is organized, it is here called a product, as being an embodiment of the Spirit's work; and con-

sequently it forms part of the work of the Holy Spirit. It is in this sense that the Church stands in the Creed. For it is included in saving belief in God's revelation of love in Christ, that this revelation continually produces an association of believers, and through their faith continually produces faith anew. In this sense Melanchthon, in the well-known prayer, gives thanks that God has founded an eternal Church, and the Augsburg Confession declares that the Church will remain for ever; and in the same sense Luther speaks of "Mother" Church. And historical research has justly pointed to the fact that the triad, God, Christ, Church, seemed for a long time almost equivalent to God, Christ, and Holy Spirit as the Trinity, though certainly the latter justly prevailed; but then the Church was at once annexed to the Holy Spirit. It was only when belief in the revelation had crumbled down, that the article of faith regarding the Church sank in value, and it was left to the Roman Church to uphold it. Intrinsically it is as important for us Evangelicals as for the Catholics. Of course, when we come to examine the idea of this object of Faith more closely, we come at once upon an irreconcilable difference of view; and through that again it becomes clearer in what sense it is for us an object of faith.

It is often said that according to the *Roman* view, what is true of the ideal Church holds also for the Church as it actually is, while we *Protestants* draw a clear distinction between the two. Or that there stress is laid on the visible Church, here on the invisible. Only in a very general sense are these distinctive descriptions justified. Or it is said that in the Roman view the Church is essentially an institution for dispensing salvation; in the Protestant, it is a product of the fact of salvation. But we have already convinced

ourselves how important the Church is for us as well as for Rome, being as it is the great instrument in God's hand for the ever new appropriation of salvation ; and conversely, it is true also for the others, that the Church is an association of Faith and Hope and Love, produced by the influence of the Divine Spirit. Very fine is the saying of Schleiermacher, that in the Roman Church the relation of the individual to Christ is dependent upon his relation to the Church, while in the Protestant his relation to the Church depends upon his relation to Christ. This definition includes a wealth of important truths, as every one can prove in his own and others' experience ; but in the strict sense of the words, it is only true if by Church we understand the organized Church. For without the community of Faith which was spoken of, there is even for us no relation to Christ. But then arises the question, why this note of organization is essential for the Roman idea of the Church, and not for the Evangelical. And the question carries us back to the fundamental difference in the understanding of the Gospel itself, which we set before ourselves at the commencement (pp. 81 ff., 96 ff.), and then in detail in the doctrine of God, of Sin, of Christ and of the Spirit. Grace is for Rome a supernatural power by which righteousness is communicated. For that reason there is need of an organized Church, and indeed a Church organized as a hierarchy, in order to guarantee the truth of the dogmas which contain the presuppositions of that power of grace, in order to administer that grace itself in the Sacraments, and in order to direct the whole life of the individual and of the community on that basis. This organized Church is itself the present Christ, in His threefold office as teacher, high-priest and king ; as is to be seen with especial clearness in the wonderful combination of the

Sacrifice of the Mass with the Sacrament of Penance. Since on the other hand, for us Protestants, grace is the personal, gracious will of God, personally revealed in Christ, which as such produces trust, there is no room for the Church organized as a hierarchy: indeed, it is not only unnecessary, but is an encumbrance. For us, the Church cannot be anything but the association of believers through which, as God's instrument, He produces faith in us. As such, however, the Church is even for us really necessary for salvation, and is therefore an object of faith—for the afore-mentioned reasons. God's personal self-revelation in history cannot otherwise become effectual for us.

We are now free to assign their proper worth to the definitions of the distinction between the Protestant and the Catholic ideas of the Church, which we at first rejected as inaccurate; in particular to the expression which in our Church is so much abused, the visible and the invisible Church. The Church is for us not invisible in the sense of being an unsubstantial and dream-like entity, as our opponents in ridicule declare, but rather has in the possession of Revelation, in the word of the Gospel, a mark of its real existence which no one can fail to recognize. But true faith is invisible, i.e. known with certainty to God alone; and thus far the Church is an invisible bond of common faith in men's hearts, certain though it is that this secret becomes known to the believers among themselves, and also in its influence upon those who are not yet believers. It is thus no contradiction that believers and unbelievers are mixed together: "wheat and tares must grow together until the harvest". It is of this Church in which we believe, that all the separate titles of honour used in the Creed hold true; it is one, it is universal, it is holy, it is Apostolic. Of it, therefore, holds true

also in its proper sense the statement—"it cannot err," because it possesses *the* truth from God. Of it, rightly understood, the other statement holds true—"out of it there is no salvation," because real salvation is inseparable from God's revelation in Christ. Of it, finally, the statement rightly understood holds true—"it shall not be overthrown, it remaineth for ever," because God does not reveal Himself to none effect, but rather continually, somewhere or other and by some means or other, produces faith—by which we return to our starting-point, and our treatment of the subject is thus complete.

It follows, however, immediately from this that no single Church, of those which exist side by side in secular history, is co-extensive with this Church in which we believe. That is the Roman claim for the Roman Church. It is our joy and pride that we, on the other hand, believe also in the Roman Church in the sense of the Creed, and that we yet can believe in all sincerity that our Protestant churches have the pre-eminence over it. For every *individual Church* is to be valued in the measure in which it serves the highest purpose of the Church in which we believe, viz. to be the means of producing saving faith; and we are convinced that for this purpose, the Protestant Churches are more adapted, because they are privileged to understand the Gospel more profoundly. This advantage we can make clear to ourselves, in the measure in which we keep in mind the danger in which even the Protestant Churches stand, of obscuring the pure idea of the Church. That happened very early in the struggle of our Churches, especially with the fanatics. In order as strictly as possible to guard as against them the objectivity of the Revealed way of Salvation, as it is assured by the stress laid upon the

means of grace, the indissoluble connexion of the Revelation, or of the means of grace, with Faith, was in the *Lutheran Church* loosened. But then there was laid upon the outward ecclesiastical communion, with its guarantees for purity of doctrine and proper administration of the Sacraments, greater stress than was consistent with the original reforming idea of the Church; and when the outward ecclesiastical communion was called the visible Church, this designation acquired at the same time a different sense, and its opposite, the invisible Church, likewise a false emphasis. Was it not then very easy to identify the orthodox Lutheran Church with the Church of our belief, or at least to associate them so closely, that people were tempted to identify them? This temptation was not resisted, or at least not with sufficient earnestness, by those so-called Reforms of the Lutheran idea of the Church which were so rife in the second third of the past century, and which in the end, by asserting the superiority of the divinely instituted office over the congregation, entered upon definitely Catholic lines. Such obscurations have their fundamental reason in the loosening of the original unity of the Revelation (or means of grace) with faith, in the sense of making the means of grace independent; in which there lies in principle an approximation to the Roman way of looking at things. But on the other hand, that separation took place also in the *Reformed* Churches, likewise in conflict with the fanatics, in such wise that faith was loosed from its objective foundation, and was left standing alone; which in principle was an approximation to the position of the fanatics. The emphasis then in Dogmatics fell upon the invisible Church, now regarded as the community of those fore-ordained to salvation, while the means of grace were regarded as the property

in the first place of the visible Church, in which further the note of Church discipline now became prominent; in both of which tendencies there is a change but not an improvement in the original use of the terms visible and invisible.

This history of the idea of the Church has, however, only made it clearer that the understanding of it purely from the fundamental principles of the Reformers, is a treasure which we Protestants possess as against Rome and the Sects, and which we have to make sure to ourselves by an ever new and ever more profound apprehension of it. On that, in spite of all variety of historical development, the truth and freedom of the Gospel depends. And those last words, taken from the time in which Christianity began (Gal. II. 5; V. 1), may serve to recall to our minds once again, that the Protestant conception of the Church which we have sketched, follows as necessarily from the understanding of our religion as a whole as was shown at the beginning. Detailed investigations of the occurrence and use of the word Church in the New Testament, are of small service for this purpose; and what additions they do really make to Christian knowledge belong rather to Ethics than to Dogmatics. The same is true of the discussion of the relation between the idea of the Church and that of the Kingdom of God. For in reality in such a discussion all that has already been affirmed may also be treated of; as, e.g. the essential identification of the Church and the Kingdom of God in the Roman doctrine, in contrast to our discrimination of them, but also the necessity of the Church in which we believe, for the realization of the Kingdom of God.

In this doctrine of the Church that of the MEANS OF GRACE is contained. When it is said that the Church

administers the means of grace, the statement is correct, but neither free from the liability of being misunderstood nor complete. It is liable to be misunderstood, because the word "administer" almost necessarily leads one to think of the community of believers in some way organized; while by doing so, we wipe out the distinction which we have continually laid stress on above, between the Church in which we believe, and which, therefore, has a place in Dogmatics, and the Church in the ethical or legal sense. But the statement that the Church administers the means of grace is also not complete. For no objection can be made to the assertion that the Church *is* the means of grace. The Church is actually so: that was the characteristic point of view of the preceding treatment of the subject—an indispensable means of grace, necessary for salvation. By means of the community of those who believe in God's grace, God produces belief ever anew; that community is the great instrument of the Holy Spirit, and must be so, in the sense already explained: we cannot think of the matter in any other fashion, provided we believe in our God, the Father of Jesus Christ. But if now we go more minutely into the question, how far we may and must call this Church a means of grace, the more precise idea of a means of grace, as understood in common speech, becomes clear to us. The community of those who believe in the grace of God in Christ is for others, who by its agency are to be awakened to belief, a means of salvation or of grace, precisely as a community of those who believe in the grace of God in Christ and are channels of this grace. But while it is true that it is so only as a community of believers, it is equally true that their faith is not a means of grace simply as *their* faith, but as that faith which appropriates the grace of God and communicates it to others. And why this grace

requires channels of communication has been already said. It is a reality which is absolutely definite. We cannot any more ask—Why is a channel of communication necessary? Can grace not work directly? True, we have ourselves formerly spoken of the direct working of God as the Holy Spirit, and in the face of all attempts to explain it away have positively maintained it; and in the sense in which we did so there we assert it here again: indeed, for all that follows, for the doctrine of the Word of God as well as that of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, it is of permanent importance. But from another point of view, all direct working of God was denied in that former passage with equal definiteness. For so far as our faith rests upon God's approach to us in Jesus Christ, His grace is that which is manifest in the face of Jesus Christ, which is made effective in the story of His personal testimony to Himself; as was established in the first main section and developed in the whole of the second. On the other hand, every fanatical conception of our religion must oppose such a mediation of grace. For such a conception, God reveals Himself in the mysterious depths of the soul: there is no intimate, necessary relation to history, great as may, nevertheless, be the illustrative, initiatory, educative value of the latter. It is evident, too, that Rationalism requires no means for the communication of grace, and that it has here, in spite of all apparent opposition, a point of contact with fanaticism. The great Christian Churches, because they acknowledge the grace which appeared in Christ, must have a doctrine of the means of grace, in this definite sense.

In details, however, their doctrine regarding them will be as different as their conceptions of grace, and in accordance therewith of the Church itself, are different, in spite of their common recognition of the grace

of God as in some way connected with the historical self-revelation of God. Here it is a matter only of the application of principles which have already been discussed. For *Protestants*, in accordance with their idea of grace as the personal gracious will of God, the most important means of grace is the Word; for in the Word, the content of the spiritual Personality reveals itself. Sacraments, sacred ceremonies, can only be of import in union with the Word, as some special manner of presenting the Word. The Church, the community of believers, is thus itself a means of grace, in so far as it is the bearer of the effective Gospel. Contrariwise, in the *Roman* Church, because of the mystico-magical idea of grace, the Sacrament is the means of grace properly speaking. The Word is absorbed by the idea of the Sacrament; it becomes a holy, unalterable form in which power dwells. The Church administers grace, essentially as being the dispenser of the Sacraments. Among the Protestant Churches, the *Lutheran* is the "Church of the means of grace," in particular that of the Word as means of grace: in it the Word is in the strictest sense necessary to salvation. The *Reformed* Churches regard the means of grace rather as being ordained of God, valid for His ordinary manner of working, beside which there remains room for a mysterious working of God in the heart, without express relation to His historical Revelation. The more one allows the correctness of the Lutheran principle in the matter, the more carefully must one guard against the danger which lies in the fact that this Church early became more active in opposition to the fanatics than in opposition to Rome (cf. pp. 730 f.). The means of grace are for faith, because grace is for faith; therefore no doctrine of the means of grace is Protestant which loosens this connexion with saving faith, and thus in

some way translates the means of grace into magically operative, material agencies. If that holds good with regard to the doctrine of the Word, it is much more certainly the case with the sacraments which, as might be expected from the whole idea of them, offer points of attachment of all kinds for influences inferior to the truly Christian.

There remains still the question, whether to *limit* the concept means of grace to the Word and the Sacraments be not to narrow it unjustifiably. Is the grace of God not communicated also through Christian converse and through Christian art for example? The Protestant Church has no aversion to naming everything, all objects and persons, circumstances and events, by means of which God's grace is in any way brought near to a human heart, means of grace in the wider sense; as the language of devotion itself does not hesitate to do. Only it must be remembered that in the sense of Protestant Christianity, all these can be called means of grace, only if the grace of God revealed in Christ communicates itself in some way through them; and that is always brought about through the means of grace in the narrower sense, the Word concerning Christ, the Gospel. But in reality, the forms in which this operates, whether amongst individuals in their intercourse with one another, casually or in the exercise of a special profession, whether in the family circle or in public worship, and whether in the latter case in the freest manner, by the exercise of special gifts, or in the official ordered way,—these do not fall to be considered in Dogmatics as distinctions of decisive import. On the contrary, it is necessary explicitly to indicate the immeasurable richness of God's working, by which He communicates His salvation. In particular, it would be quite un-Protestant to exclude from recognition here

the silent preaching of the lives of Christian personalities, true though it be that it is only a means of grace in so far as it gives definite impressions of the content of the Gospel.

After all that has been said, the doctrine of the Word of God as a means of grace may now be made short. The main point, viz. that it is for us Protestants *the* means of grace, and why it is so, has already been decided, though it is tempting to go on to develop this in detail. It would be interesting for instance to go into the fact that even the bearers of the preparatory Revelation are bearers of the Word, and finally, the bearer of the complete Revelation is named without qualification "the Word," certain though it is that even in the former case the Word is not disjoined from the Person, but is simply the expression for the whole reality of the self-revealing God, and in the latter the identification is complete; and that in particular the propagation of this Revelation is entirely dependent on the Word. And too much stress can scarcely be laid upon the aspect of this truth according to which this Word at every stage and in all sorts of ways produces Faith or Trust, and proves itself effective only by such faith. All that follows necessarily, however, from the nature of our spiritual and moral religion, ultimately from the nature of the God of holy love who has revealed Himself to us.

For this reason too there is no need to devote more special treatment to the inner content of the Word, as the one great means of grace. Our older theologians were in principle right, when they distinguished in the Word of God *Law and Gospel;* and found both of these in the Old Testament as well as in the New, by designating as Gospel all the promises and offers of Divine

favour and grace, and as Law all the demands that God makes upon us. We are only more conscious of the inner unity of the two things. From the very beginning we had to emphasize the point, that the Gospel most completely reveals the law in its whole depth as the holy will of God, and converts us from our opposition to this will as nothing else does; but also that the life according to the Law of God is for us the true life. In the Cross of Christ, the two things, Law and Gospel, are one, and Christian Ethics in its whole range is the development of that idea: at the same time it becomes clear that the concept of law must be exactly defined, in order that it may be retained as a proper element of our religion.

From the recognition of this relation between Law and Gospel there now follows, however, a conclusion which is of importance for the doctrine of the Word of God, as a means of grace in the circumstances of the present day. The deepest sense of that doctrine was this, that it is the content of the Word which gives it its value as a means of grace. Now the older theologians identify this Word with *Holy Scripture*, as the completed whole of the canonical books, which had been miraculously produced by inspiration, and was absolutely inerrant. That was an unfounded though intelligible confusion, as we persuaded ourselves in expounding the doctrine of Scripture. Neither the actual condition of Holy Scripture nor the interest of Christian faith when it understands itself, agrees with that theory. Why the interest of faith does not do so, is now still more evident at this point, where Scripture comes under consideration simply as a means of grace. But at the same time it is still more evident why we had to exert ourselves so earnestly to obtain a real doctrine of Holy Scripture, and why it could not be otherwise de-

fined. Because, namely, this Holy Scripture properly understood, is in fact a means of grace, as the Divinely willed testimony of faith to God's historical Revelation. Thus the point which has been so much debated, about Scripture being the Word of God, or containing that Word, acquires a sense which reaches above the usual class of controversies. We must not rest content with the proposition that Scripture *contains* the Word of God, a proposition which, rightly understood, is certainly incontestable, but which in its indefiniteness readily endangers the certainty of faith; rather, Scripture *is* actually the Word of God for the believing intelligence of every generation, throughout the whole period of earthly history, but in the way which was previously explained in detail. The object which our older theologians aimed at is to be realized by our consciously giving up the kind of proof which they attempted to lay down, on the ground of our insight into the nature of the Revelation of salvation as made to faith. Only when we do that, will the statements concerning Holy Scripture as the basis of knowledge of our faith, and as a means of grace, cease to traverse one another, as they do in older writers; they rather become completely consistent. Because the Holy Scripture is a means of grace, in the quite definite sense of Protestant Christianity, it is also in the quite definite sense of Protestant Christianity the guiding principle of Dogmatics. With this, the expositions of the subjects of religious knowledge and Holy Scripture in the first Division should be carefully compared.

Less important than this relation of Scripture and Word of God, but yet worthy of attention in our consideration of the Word of God as means of grace, is the question how this *influence of the Word* is related to that of the *Spirit*. In the main, it is only a question of

applying what was said regarding the relation between the operation of the Spirit and that of the Church (pp. 722 ff.), or further back concerning the content and form of the operation of the Spirit (pp. 716 ff.). The Lutheran principle, that the Spirit does not work without the Word, is entirely correct, in order that, as against all fanatical tendencies of former or of modern times, God's Revelation in Christ may be recognized without any dubiety as the supreme norm, in the sense and measure which were often described in the foregoing. The Reformed principle, again, that the operation of the Spirit and that of the Word do not simply coincide, is right if we think of the "when and where the Spirit will" (Augs. Conf. 5), i.e. of the manifold degrees of the Spirit's working, as experience shows, and in general of the directness of the Divine operation in the sense already defined. It is useful to keep this aspect of the matter in mind, especially because there is at the present time a tendency, which cites for its own support the Lutheran doctrine of the inseparability of the Word and the Spirit, to reduce the inward religious life as a whole to a psychological mechanism, without laying sufficient stress in express terms upon the mystery of this process; and then on the other hand, because, as we already had to point out in another connexion, the operation of the Spirit is only too readily disjoined from the historical Revelation.

When we proceed as we now do to speak of the Sacraments as means of grace, connecting what we have to say with the means of grace in the Word, it must not be forgotten that the sacred ceremonies which we designate by that name have besides their significance as *means of grace*, a significance also as *professions of faith*. They are therefore to be regarded from two different and indeed opposite points of view. As means

of grace, they are what God does for us; as professions of faith, they are what we do, and that too before God, as well as before men. We find here again, as on several occasions previously, that the same action is presented to our regard as proceeding from above downwards, and also from below upwards. In the latter way of looking at it, it falls under the general idea of offering, gift presented to God; in the former, under that of gift received by us from God. This twofold manner of looking at the subject entails no essential contradiction. What is bestowed on us as the gift of God, makes appeal to our trust: its acceptance is a recognition of the Giver, a profession of trust in Him, and naturally too in presence of others and with others at the same time. Both the Protestant Confessions, moreover, as also the Roman, have accordingly recognized this twofold character of the sacred actions which are here under discussion. But there is this difference that in the Lutheran, the view of them as symbols of profession almost entirely vanishes behind that as means of grace; while in the Reformed, it occupies an independent and important position (cf. Augs. Conf., Art. 13). For the rest, we discuss in this connexion the Sacraments simply as means of grace: as forms of confession they belong essentially to Christian Ethics, or at a further remove to Liturgics and Church Law. But there is a theological basis for the fact that Church Law recognizes the œcumenical character of Baptism at least, and allows it to stand, not as a mark of division between the different Confessions, but as a common symbol of adherence to Christianity, as being a means of the saving grace of God in Christ. The practice of the Jesuits has indeed begun to render inoperative this time-honoured principle even of the Roman Church, seeing that those who have not been baptized in that

Church are nowadays with increasing frequency re-baptized, chiefly under the pretext that it is not known whether the baptism was administered in an orderly manner. And it must be granted that the older practice prevailed for quite a different reason than that indicated, the same as that which led to the new departure, viz. because the Roman Church claimed jurisdiction over all who had been baptized. In any case the call becomes on this account ever more pressing for the Protestant Churches, with reference to their mutual relation to the other Sacrament, the Lord's Supper, to cease regarding it as a symbol of division between the different Confessions. That it should be so is directly contrary to the essential meaning of this ceremony; although this conception, so contrary to the idea of the Sacrament, goes back to the beginnings of the Reformation, having been first enforced by the Reformed Churches on ethico-legal grounds, and then supplied with a theological basis by the Lutherans.

To prefix *a general doctrine of the Sacraments* to the treatment in particular of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, is a course the advisability of which is often questioned, first by Zwingli, then by Schleiermacher, on the ground that, as history proves by many examples, through the use of the word (sacrament) which belongs not to the New Testament but to the Catholic Church, we involuntarily introduce Catholic conceptions. That is possible, but by no means necessary. If the general treatment take the proper form, it may contrariwise serve to exclude such misconceptions. At the present day, when the position of New Testament study does not permit us simply to turn separate texts to use in Dogmatics, it is doubly to be desired that we frame our fundamental propositions from our understanding of the Gospel as a whole; which is indeed the position

with regard to the use of Scripture taken up and argued in this book.

The best way of approach to the subject is furnished by the early Protestant idea of a Sacrament, as it is presented in the Apology for the Augsburg Confession (7, 3 ff.). According to that, the Sacraments are "symbols and ceremonies," external usages, acts, "which God has commanded, and which have a Divine promise of grace connected with them". That truth regarding the Sacraments which we had to characterize above as the most important, namely their relation to the Word as a means of grace, is in this definition expressed in the clearest possible way. And all possibility of misunderstanding with regard to that is removed, if we forthwith keep in view the words immediately following,— "the Word and the outward symbols work in the heart in the same manner"; "the fruit of the Sacraments is the same as that of the Word". The unity of Word and Sacraments, or more accurately the precedence of the Word over the Sacraments, is thus made as unmistakable as the Protestant conception of grace, and therefore likewise of the means of grace, requires it to be; yet without detriment to the peculiar nature and validity of the Sacraments. In other words, the Sacraments are really means of grace, just as the Word is, but only in so far as they are one with the Word,—in their inmost nature are the Word. God gives us what the promise, conjoined with and inherent in the symbol, offers us. And therefore it is upon the promise of grace that the emphasis lies in the above definition. Without that, the Sacraments would be empty symbols, without content or effect; or they would be ordinances which, while supersensuous, are conceived under the forms of sense, being unspiritual, making no personal appeal. The power of the Sacra-

ments is the Word in the Sacraments: it is to the Sacraments as Word that the real Divine influence belongs which we were able to ascribe to the Word. But the Sacraments are distinguished from the Word in that they are usages, symbols, acts; they are "the Word visible," as the Reformers said with Augustine, filling his happily coined phrase with the new impressions they derived from the Gospel. In that lies the peculiarity of the effect from the Sacraments. They represent to the eye what the Word instils into the mind through the ear. To man as a creature of sense, the spiritual content of the Word is thus in a peculiar manner brought near; it becomes concrete. Now in that there lies a specially insistent offer of grace. What is most important and most central here presents itself as free as it possibly can be from all particular relations and private interpretations, in its potent objectivity, finality, and inexhaustibility; and presents itself for our appropriation in the most direct way. And in this their peculiarly effective characteristic, the Sacraments are "seals" of grace. No doubt our older theologians often mean nothing more by that phrase than what they also call confirmation, i.e. of faith which is already present but requires to be increased; but they do also use it, and with perfect right, as implying confirmation in the sense of corroboration as by pledge given, through the symbol conjoined with the Word. Nor is it correct to characterize this idea as Reformed in distinction from the Lutheran conception. Did not Luther himself expressly rejoice in the Lord's Supper as an earnest of forgiveness? This thought would be un-Lutheran, only if it were denied that God communicates in the Sacrament what the promise offers, that the Sacraments are means of grace in the strict sense; which, however, is here taken for

granted. It is part of this idea of the sealing of grace in the Sacraments that, in distinction from the public preaching of the Word, it applies grace specially to the individual. That is also true. Only it must not be forgotten that there is also a personal assurance of the word of grace given apart from the Sacraments, and that in the deepest sense there is no other assurance at all except what is personal. More important is it that what we have already called the peculiar value of the Sacrament is established by the third characteristic which lies in its idea, by the command of God or Christ, by the word of institution; as distinguished from the Word which we have already spoken of, which has a promise, grace, for its content. That we do not simply represent to ourselves the effect of the act as we have described it, the powerful appeal to the senses thus imparted to the spiritual Word, as a matter psychologically intelligible from our own experience, but that we can at the same time believe that we thereby honour the Will of God,—that depends in the first instance at least on the Word of Institution, by which the Lord, who Himself is grace personified, explicitly adopted this method of working also by means of concrete acts. We shall have to take up immediately the difficulty which lies in this for us, with our modern, historical way of looking at things.

But now the idea of the Sacrament which we have so far developed, is by its very simplicity, and its manifest connexion with the fundamental Protestant conception of our religion, directly fitted to be used as the standard by which to decide the most important questions which arise in the doctrine of the Sacraments; and as we now apply it to this purpose, it will at the same time become clearer and more definite in itself.

In the first place the *necessity* of the Sacraments is

not so unconditional as that of the Word. "There can be no people of God without the Word of God, and the Word of God cannot exist apart from the people of God." The existence of the community of the faithful depends upon the Word: apart from the Word there is no salvation. With regard to the Sacraments the teaching of our Church has always been that contempt of them, not the want of them, excludes from salvation. They are themselves indeed a special mode of presenting the Word, and in their way specially valuable, as we saw; but for that very reason they are "matters of order," and not unconditionally necessary.

In the second place, we define in accordance with our leading idea the *relation of the Sacraments to the Holy Spirit and to the Church.* Because the Sacraments are the Word in concrete form, all that was said regarding the Word in the relations mentioned holds good with regard to the Sacraments, and need not be repeated. It will suffice to recall this point. The Holy Spirit of God and of Christ works in the community of believers by means of the Sacraments. But so completely is the community His instrument, the channel of His grace by means of His Word, and therefore, too, in the present connexion, the "Word made visible," that no imperfection in its empirical form can make this means of grace inoperative, however it may hinder it in producing its effect; and above all, no unworthiness in the minister of any organized Church can tell in this way. So powerfully does the dogmatic pronouncement "I believe in a holy Christian Church," prevail over every mode of organization of the individual Churches in the ethical sense.

With equal clearness there follows from our leading idea, in the third place, the *importance of faith* for the

effective use of the Sacraments. Because the gracious will of the personal God cannot become effective otherwise than through trust, so neither can the means of grace, and therefore the Sacraments just as little as the Word. No idea can be admitted that they are of effect without trust in the receiver, merely because of the outward performance and reception of them, "ex opere operato". The Sacraments should be so used, that there is conjoined with them the faith which trusts the promises that are offered and communicated by means of the Sacraments (Augs. Conf., Art. 13). Not as if faith made the Sacraments any more than the Word; the objectivity of the means of grace is according to the Lutheran conception exactly the same in both cases. But faith is necessary, that they may have the effect which they are intended to have, namely that they may be profitable. Here the difference between the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches which was mentioned above is again to be kept in mind. When we say at the same time that the Sacraments awaken and strengthen faith, that is just as little a contradiction as when we had to say the same of the relation of Spirit and Faith (pp. 721 f.), a matter which we must keep still more clearly before us when we come to speak of the Divine and the human spirit, and of faith as the great work of the Spirit acting in the Church through the means of grace.

In the fourth place, the decision of the question as to the *number of the Sacraments* is found from the idea which we have laid down. The institution of Baptism and the Supper by Christ was for the Protestant Churches the decisive reason for finally recognizing these two ceremonies as Sacraments, after there had at first been some inclination to add others, Absolution in particular, as the Apology continues to show. But the other

elements in the idea contributed also to the exclusion of the rest of the seven Catholic Sacraments, partly in so far as the outward sign could only artificially be found in them, and partly because they did not contain the whole promise of grace, and that too for all Christians as such.

As to these questions which we have so far spoken of, the idea of the Sacraments leads directly to their proper answer. In a group of others, it serves to dispose of them as being in contradiction to the fundamental idea of the Protestant religion. This holds with regard to the question as to a special content in the Sacraments and so naturally a special product, as also regarding that as to the relation of this special content to the outward sign.

The grace which God through the means of the Sacraments offers,—represents, imparts and seals (*vide supra*)—is that which is also offered and imparted in the Word, being the "promise of grace," the "Gospel," "Christ," "forgiveness of sins," "new birth," in short the whole *content* of the Divine revelation of love. The question as to something over and above this, peculiar to the Sacrament, some special gift, was one that had a long history behind it, and the Lord's Supper gave rise to it even in the Protestant Churches. But the simple circumstance that in Baptism likewise no such special gift could be discovered—for to designate the Blood of Christ or the whole Trinity as such was evidently a resource of despair—is proof that the question is irrelevant; quite apart from the fact that the new expression for this supposed special gift, heavenly matter, i.e. something sensible yet supersensible, comes suspiciously near the magical character of the Roman Sacrament.

In any case a gift so peculiar ought to have an *effect* corresponding to it. But now our Confessions expressly

declare that the profit, the effect of the Word and of the Sacraments, is one and the same (Apol. 7, 5). Formally, therefore, modern theologians in the Lutheran Church are correct, who ascribe to this sensible-supersensible gift a sensible-supersensible effect, a so-called spiritual-bodily effect upon the hidden material basis of the personality. If, however, it be the case, as we shall yet convince ourselves, that this thought can neither be made clear nor yet be established on Biblical grounds, the contrary conclusion is to be preferred, this namely, —since the result is the same, the content is also the same. This point will be dealt with finally in the discussion of the Lord's Supper.

Then, finally, the question over which the most passionate and purposeless strife has raged in the doctrine of the Sacraments, specially in view of the Lord's Supper, simply falls to the ground ; the question namely as to the *relation* of that special *sacramental gift to the outward act*, to the symbol, or, as it has been called in reference to the heavenly material, to the earthly material. If no special gift is present, this problem is without object. The most important answers given in history to this question have been expressed in formulæ. On the assumption of a special content in the Sacraments, the relation of the heavenly to the earthly material, of the reality to the symbol, is either that of magical identity (Rome), or mystical immanence (Lutherans), or mystical simultaneity (Calvin), or ideal correspondence or representation (Zwingli). It is quite a different thing to assert the relation of simultaneity, nay even, properly understood, immanence, between the outward act and the real gift of God, when thereby we mean the significance of the Sacraments as means of grace which we have explained above. But this truth of faith is quite independent of the idea of a

special gift in the Lord's Supper: rather is this latter idea excluded by the strictly Protestant conception of the Sacraments.

But this statement is placed beyond the possibility of misunderstanding, only when we treat of the two Sacraments, BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER, in detail. We cannot, however, at the present day discuss their significance for faith without having regard to the fact that their *historical basis* is not, as it once was, unquestioned. Supposing that neither in Baptism nor in the Lord's Supper there was in any sense an expression of Jesus' will, then the importance of these sacraments for salvation, which we have asserted above on the contrary assumption in accordance with our Creeds, would be done away with, certainly in so far as it was founded upon the command of Christ. But on the other hand, the investigation which has thus far been carried out makes it more easy for us to enter without prejudice upon the discussion of this historical question; so far at all events as the Sacraments as the Word made visible are subordinate to the Word, the necessity of which for salvation is to Christians unconditional. Consequently it is possible also in the Protestant Churches, for one who is convinced that both Sacraments were instituted by Christ, to understand one who has become uncertain on this point. Conversely, the latter, although he sees in the Sacraments only early ceremonies of the Christian community, may feel himself to a large extent at one with the former in the value which he personally sets upon the Sacraments; just because he too, as has been shown, values the Sacrament as the Word in visible form, and does not place it above the Word, or external to it. This position of affairs itself is then an instructive example of a

previous proposition, to the effect that the degree of historical probability which the faith that seeks to understand itself requires, varies according to the value of the particular historical tradition in question (cf. pp. 217 ff., 298 ff.).

In the *New Testament* the passages supporting *Baptism* are more numerous than those alluding to the Lord's Supper. In general, Baptism is clearly made to refer to the beginning, the first appropriation of saving grace (Rom. VI.), to the birth unto newness of life; the Lord's Supper to its continuation, to the confirmation of saving faith. With regard now to the institution by Christ, for a long time Baptism was more questioned than the Lord's Supper. In the first instance, because of the so-called baptismal formula in Matthew XXVIII. 19; since not only by Paul (Gal. III. 27; 1 Cor. I. 13), but also by the Acts of the Apostles, Baptism "into Christ," not "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," is attested as the practice of the earliest period. In addition, the question as to the nature of the Resurrection appearances, and indeed even the variation of the text, had their influence upon the opinions held as to Matthew XXVIII. 19, since the form in question is not attested by all the Manuscripts. The attitude assumed towards the general question of the institution by Jesus is relatively independent of that assumed towards Matthew XXVIII. 19. While some absolutely give up the former, and assume that the Church in good faith referred what was its own creation to Jesus, others are inclined to maintain the establishment by Jesus, for the reason that otherwise the universal practice of the Church in the earliest period, which was nowhere called in question, is unintelligible. They assume for one thing that on some occasion or other Jesus must have given an express

command; for another, that for a time Jesus Himself baptized (John III. 22); and again, that the continuation of John's Baptism was for Jesus a matter of course.

To others, the result of the most recent researches in the department of the "History of Religions," with regard to the meaning and content of Baptism, appears almost of more importance than this question as to the institution of the rite. In Romans VI. and Colossians II., they find a "mystical-pneumatic" conception of Baptism, a Mystery in the sense of the nature-religion with which Christianity had to struggle for victory, and which it only succeeded in overcoming by adopting considerable elements from it. "Baptism for the dead," by which the mysterious blessing of Baptism, as was desired, would be made available for the departed, is held to be specially "tell-tale" (1 Cor. XV. 29). The objection, how such a view of Baptism could in Paul's case be combined with his idea of faith, they answer by pointing to this very spirit of the times, in which elements that to us seem incompatible were compatible, and cite ideas which they hold to be similar, for instance that of "spirit" as a supersensible-sensible substance. Here again is one of the points where for Dogmatics it is more important to have regard to that use of Scripture which is founded on principle, than to lose oneself in details of exegesis. Granted that this opinion were established beyond doubt as the one in agreement with the sources, which is by no means the case, the determinative principle would still apply that for us the general understanding of the Gospel, and consequently in this question the superiority of the Word to the Sacrament, must be decisive.

To get a clear conception of the *Protestant doctrine of Baptism*, we must in the first place deliberately look away from the form of it so common among us, namely

infant-baptism. Assuming this, when we remember the points of view already laid down (pp. 743 ff.), it is particularly clear in the case of this rite, how it is at one and the same time an act of the Church (in the doctrinal sense: the meaning in Church Law does not come within our view in Dogmatics) and an act of God. It is reception into the community of believers, and thereby into communion with God, who uses the community, the bearer of the Gospel, of the true means of grace, as the instrument of His working. It is, however, necessary explicitly to set forth how the grace of God in Christ is in this particular means of grace more precisely specified. There is no question of a special grace not contained in the Word, no question of the implanting of a natural germ of the spirit, vague parody of the supernatural natural power which the Roman Church asserts; and in saying that we put an end to all questionings regarding the relation of the water to the promise. But the particular phrases used for the salvation made ours in Baptism are worth noticing. True, the words "into Christ," or "in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit," conjoined with the outward act, place it beyond doubt that the significance of the rite is reception into the real communion of the God who has revealed Himself in Christ; and this is equally clear when Paul speaks of being baptized "in one spirit into one body," or of "putting on Christ," and of "dying and rising again with Christ". But when under the impress of the outward act of immersion or sprinkling, stress is laid now upon the thought of purification, i.e. the forgiveness of sins, now upon the new birth, it is well, seeing that this latter word is of ambiguous use, to make clear that it likewise in the New Testament means nothing but what we have so often, and now once more, described. Baptism is simply reception into

the communion of God, viewed in the entire wealth of the totality of relations involved in it.

But just here arises a serious question. Does the outward act of Baptism coincide *in time* with the inward change which is designated second birth? Schleiermacher pointed out the conditions under which this question is to be answered in the affirmative. Namely when, on the one side, the reception into the Church and the grace of God that regenerates through the Word, the grace of which the Church is the channel, meet with thoroughly trustful receptivity on the other. There is no doubt that this is not only the ideal state of matters, but may actually be fully realized; e.g. even at the present day under specially favourable circumstances in the mission field. But of the highest value are accounts contained in the New Testament, which show us that even at the beginning this was by no means always the case, but rather that the Spirit might precede the water, or equally well the water the Spirit (Acts VIII. 13, 15 and X. 47). These accounts are a warning not to curb with a formula the variety which God has willed as a characteristic of the history of the new life. As this should be avoided in general, so also should it be in regard to the relation of that new life to Baptism. The problem is strictly not one connected with Baptism, but that of the new birth itself, and is consequently not a problem of Dogmatics but of Ethics (*v.* Ethics, pp. 198 ff.). Hence, so far as it is related to Baptism, it would be already disposed of by what has been stated above, were it not placed in a new light by the fact that Baptism has very largely taken the form of infant-baptism.

Do INFANT-BAPTISM and second birth go together? Now that means—can *children have faith?* For nowhere in the New Testament sphere of thought is it

possible to think of the new birth without faith, and the Reformation revived this very truth, and did so expressly in regard to the Sacraments. In the Roman Church they may be effective simply by the performance of them, but the Protestant Churches are Protestant virtually because of the conviction that without faith they are not effective; whatever emphasis be laid upon the assertion that faith does not make the Sacraments, but properly understood is itself produced by them, so far as they are the Word of God, produced however for that reason as faith, as personal saving trust. So then Luther emphasized, with special reference to infant-baptism, that its fruit was dependent upon faith. But by that statement the difficulty we have mentioned was inevitably raised; and the varying answers which Luther gives in the Larger Catechism show that he had not found any one completely satisfactory. At first he sheers off; he will leave the question to be settled by scholars: it was enough to know that God had given the Holy Spirit to so many who had been baptized in infancy. And on God's word and command everything, according to him, depended, not in the first place on faith: my faith surely does not make the Sacrament, but only receives it. But afterwards he seeks to answer the definite question, and says that we bring the child to Baptism in the belief and hope that he has faith, and we pray that God may give him faith. But prayer for another cannot produce faith, if it is understood in Luther's sense how personal a thing faith is. Therefore he has in the end to content himself with saying that the Sacrament itself produces faith. True; but how in the case of infants? We are back at the same point again. This last answer became in essentials that of the Lutheran Church. And when the Lutheran theologians remembered what they said elsewhere

regarding faith, they had to ascribe exactly the same characteristics to the faith of infants, which they had distinguished in the idea of faith in general, namely "knowledge, assent, trust". In infants? Yes; but not properly speaking "conscious"; rather "unmediated". By saying that, however, it was admitted that faith was not the same in infants as in adults. It makes therefore no great difference when others contented themselves, as some of the early theologians already did, with assuming the existence of vague emotions in the infant soul analogous to faith.

In fact this is the only possible way to cloak over the difficulty, and it is still adopted by many. But in the measure that they are thereby led to praise the receptivity of childhood, as pure, unresisting openness to Divine influences, above the hard-won trust of manhood, the error is manifest. Misuse of sacred words is the only name for it; the sublime saying, "Become as little children," being especially requisitioned. Only let the attempt once be made to introduce such thoughts anywhere in the New Testament where faith is spoken of, and the inner incompatibility will be acutely felt. Others have therefore attempted to tone down the idea of the new birth instead of that of faith. In infant-baptism, they say, a "substantial new birth" takes place, some secret implanting of a new germ in the dark underlying basis of the personality; and this can happen apart from faith. In this case violence is done to the idea of the new birth, as in the other to the idea of faith. Let the attempt again be made to introduce it into the New Testament; only let it be remembered that it is by no means only with the phrase "new birth" that we have to do, but with all the interchangeable ideas of the new man, conversion, renewing, which are often mentioned. To the aid of this quiet influence

of New Testament theology against such errors there comes the influence of the Psychology of Religion. This science, too, has no place either for the idea of faith which is held to be faith and yet not faith, or for the idea of a substantial new birth which both is and is not a new birth. Under the severe pressure from these two sides, there has arisen a third attempt to solve the difficulty. The idea of new birth is upheld in the only form which is possible in our spiritual and moral religion, viz. in its personal character; and likewise the full idea of personal faith, the fiction of infant-faith being candidly given up. "But," it is said, "the personal appropriation of salvation may be brought about in the children of Christians before faith is formed in the children. Faith is included in the grace which is granted, till the faith shows itself" (Cremer, similarly Althaus). It is easy to see that such statements are based on Luther's great fundamental principle that the Word (Sacrament) produces faith; but also that they conceal rather than solve the definite problem now before us. They lead again to the thought which we have already rejected. For in this connexion the question is not as to whether God by the Word produces faith, but as to whether and how personal trust arises in a person, and whether an infant is a suitable subject for it. The question is not as to faith as the result of God's working, but as to human capacity for receiving it. And there is no difference made to that by any distinction drawn between new birth and justification: whether it is warranted or not, there is certainly no justification either without faith. But this line of thought can only be carried to its conclusion, after we have heard what the *opponents of infant-baptism* have to say.

For without doubt the impression is justified, that infant-baptism has not been vindicated as a Baptism of

regeneration by the means which have been hitherto employed. The opponents of it stand upon their position that regeneration apart from personal saving faith is self-contradictory, personal saving faith in infants likewise; and that therefore infant-baptism as a Baptism of regeneration is self-contradictory. To regard it, however, merely as a ceremony of reception into the Church, is held to rob the ordinance of its value; for if our infant-baptism be a different Baptism from that of Apostolic times, our Church is not the Church of God, as those who favour infant-baptism, it will be admitted, are the most enthusiastic in asserting it to be. Now one position which the defenders of infant-baptism at one time maintained with great emphasis, has been more and more abandoned, namely the New Testament authority for the Baptism of infants, in the sense of proof drawn from separate texts or from accounts of the actual state of affairs in the Churches of the earliest period. In regard to the former, since of course there was not a direct command requiring infant-baptism, the combination of Mark x. 13 f. with John iii. 5, and Matthew xxviii. 19, in various orders of thought in details, was held to be unanswerable. Jesus blessed children, and therefore showed that He wished their salvation. This according to the second text they cannot of themselves attain; but they can according to the third text, through the recognized means of Baptism. They should therefore be baptized. As the force of this conclusion was no longer universally admitted, any more than the clearness of the premises, emphasis was readily laid upon the passages in which the Baptism of a whole household was spoken of (Acts xvi. 33; 1 Cor. i. 16), and the needed support was supplied for the main point. Or the conclusion was drawn from the children being addressed (Eph. vi. 1), or from their being called holy (1 Cor. vii.

14), that they had been baptized. The same error was here committed, and in regard to the latter passage it was forgotten that, if the children had been baptized, one would have expected, conversely, the fact of their own Baptism to have been cited as the reason of their holiness, rather than their relation to the parents. To this there was added the undeniable testimonies from the history of the early Church, that infant-baptism came very slowly to be recognized.

All the more important then does the question become, whether the opponents of infant-baptism have anything really better to put in its place. There can be no doubt that that is not the case when the *Baptists*, taking the only logical course, admit Baptism merely as the sign that the new birth has already taken place. By doing so, they in principle annul the Protestant conception of the Church and of the means of grace, and lay upon their own act as against the act of God an emphasis which endangers the assurance of salvation, and bring themselves moreover into conflict with the testimony of the New Testament, of which they claim to be the only strict upholders ; for there we found by no means only this relation of new birth and Baptism. In actual life, however, the demand to state definitely the culminating point of the new life, leads under the conditions of our time, which are not the same as those of the first period or of the mission field, almost necessarily to dangerous self-probing, and readily also to still more dangerous self-righteousness, and to harsh judgment upon others. In all that, the Baptists involuntarily attest the superiority of the Reformation idea of Church and means of grace. But when they cease to adhere steadfastly to their position as described above, which is the only strictly logical one, and limit themselves to admitting to Baptism adults only, the difference

from the practice of the Church is so small as to be negligible, whenever they themselves have grown into rather considerable communities, as in England and America. If nevertheless this difference is consciously kept up, as far as may be, it has even there the same results as we have mentioned.

This judgment to which we are necessarily led in regard to the requirement of adult-baptism, carries with it the judgment as to infant-baptism which accords with the facts. It is the Divinely intended form of Baptism among peoples which have become Christian. The authority for it does not rest upon any direct command in the New Testament, but upon the *inner necessity* by which the Church was led, from the nature of Baptism, to adopt it under altered circumstances which she recognized as providential. In Baptism as infant-baptism, the preventing grace of God, which is applied to us through Christ, shows itself clearly as acting on the individual, by "laying him in the bosom of the Church" (Luther), and thus assuring him of all its benefits. Or in other words, infant-baptism is symbol and pledge of the call of the individual, or of the forgiving, regenerating grace of God in Christ; and in this sense is really a Sacrament of regeneration. For, as we had always to emphasize, faith does not make the Sacrament. In this, the theory which we discussed above (p. 757) is quite correct. It can therefore truly be said that in all cases the baptized person only learns in the development of his personal life, to believe what he has already of long standing possessed, viz. the promise of grace; and that he has long possessed it, his Baptism assures him. But in saying this, we have also said all that can be stated with clearness and truth: the full objectivity of the grace of God is emphatically asserted. In our ethical religion, such statements as those mentioned

above—"the personal appropriation of salvation precedes faith; indeed faith is included in the bestowal of grace until the faith appears," are liable to be misunderstood. And such statements as, "the parents can show faith on the children's behalf," or, "there is no difference between children and grown people," are absolutely impossible. This leads again to the spectre of infant-faith, and ultimately takes us away from the Protestant understanding of the Sacraments to the Roman. Regeneration is real in personal experience, only when the grace of God produces personal trust through the Word of the Gospel, and in the measure in which that is the case. In short, the incomparable blessing, which Luther desired not to lose hold of when, in the Larger Catechism, he rates infant-baptism so high, i.e. the full comfort of the free, preventing grace of God in Christ for me personally, independent not only of my works but also of my faith—this great comfort, for the sake of which Luther was willing to accept even the impossible idea of infant-faith, remains untouched. What we lose is only the burden of this incredible infant-faith—incredible because of the very nature of faith. It was for the comfort above described that Luther strove with perfect reason: there is no substitute for it. How could one in doubt as to his salvation support himself by the recollection of his experience? Only in the revealed grace of God can he anchor his trust, and this grace is guaranteed to him in his Baptism. Before he was conscious of himself, in this same actual world in which he knows himself to be lost, has this grace been assured to him, through the faith-inspiring Word in the believing community. But this comfort we possess most completely, because most purely, when the alien thought of infant-faith is not introduced. And it deserves to be mentioned at least too, that the other aspect of the

matter, according to which Baptism is a stimulus and source of power for the daily conflict with sin, is thoroughly upheld in Luther's exposition. For responsibility is laid on one in and with the incomparable gift; a matter that has to be expounded in Ethics. Only when it is so understood does Baptism really stand as the safe, guiding star over all our life. And in the practice of the organized Churches, the glory of this Protestant idea of infant-baptism will only be completely seen, when the parts of the Liturgies which are not compatible with it have gradually disappeared: to the accomplishment of this, may the Baptists, wrong as they are in the main point, continue to act as a healthy spur. In what sense now this conception of infant-baptism can be called "churchly," specifically Lutheran, appears from an exact comparison with the idea of the Sacraments contained in the Apology and explained above. But the fact that, as a result of the thought that there is a special gift in the Sacraments, statements of a different type also found their way into our Creeds, has likewise been repeatedly pointed out. In so far, it is a dispute about words, if it were objected to the view which we have set forth, that it is not exactly in keeping with the Lutheran idea of the Sacraments, but only, say, with the Lutheran idea of grace and means of grace; an objection which includes the most severe self-inflicted criticism of the theory which gives out that it is "correct".

On hardly any other point of Dogmatics is the change of view so palpably manifest as on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Only a few decades ago the opinion could be expressed, that the reconstruction of the doctrine of the Supper, as that of a mystery with spiritual and bodily effect, was an important task of modern theo-

logy. It was soon recognized how contradictory to the intention of the Reformers this attempt was. But the institution of the Supper and its reference to Jesus' sacrificial death, appeared certain beyond all possibility of doubt. Indeed, even circles otherwise sceptical laid stress upon the strength of this tradition, and allowed its full importance for our faith. The dispute raged only round the question as to how it was to be understood in detail. But now what was then regarded as most surely established has become doubtful, and as can be easily understood this *historical investigation* with regard to the Supper attracts more general attention than the similar inquiry with regard to Baptism. Here it is necessary to keep strictly apart the two questions which we have just mentioned. Was this Supper originally in Jesus' own mind connected with the thought of His atoning sacrificial death? Did Jesus intend that His disciples should repeat it?

The *first* question is at the present moment frequently answered in the sense that Paul was in the main responsible for the connexion in question. On the assumption that this answer is correct, difference of opinion prevails as to whether Paul connected other ideas besides with it, and what these were, and likewise as to what was the meaning attached to the ceremony before Paul's time. In the main, two groups may be distinguished. The one relies essentially upon grounds of *literary criticism.* The varying text of the so-called words of institution is made the starting-point, in order to render probable the complete uncertainty of the tradition that Jesus had His own sacrificial death in mind as one main thought at the Last Supper. And the words, "My blood of the new covenant," which are decisive for the sacrificial death, were found impossible to translate (back into Aramaic), and in this was seen a sign of late

origin. In addition to this were cited traces in the earliest times of joyous common feasts of the Christians without express reference to the sacrificial death of Jesus, such as are found in the Acts of the Apostles, and especially in the prayers of the so-called Teaching of the Twelve Apostles. The Last Supper is therefore taken to be rather Jesus' parting meal in prospect of approaching separation from His disciples; but it is also an anticipation of the Messianic meal, in the certainty of His early reunion with them (Spitta). Or as others hold, it is a figure representing the sanctification of daily life by the spiritual reception of the nature of Jesus, as bread and wine nourish and strengthen the natural life (Harnack). This last opinion is hard to find in our texts. How truly that is the case is shown by the most recently expressed conjecture, that Jesus must have said "My flesh and blood," or at least that would have been clearer for what He really meant. More readily can one cite in support of the first meaning of the prospect of reunion, the words regarding drinking anew in the Father's Kingdom, which were spoken in close connexion with the Last Supper. Only this thought can without any contradiction be combined with the reference to the sacrificial death, and by no means excludes it; and even of the other opinion mentioned above the same could be said. But to dispose of the "blood of the covenant" by arguments of literary criticism, always gives the impression of being very artificial. If, however, this thought be left untouched in the text, yet without regarding it as originating with Jesus, the account given by Mark will most naturally be taken as dependent upon the innovator Paul. But no one has yet been able to make intelligible how Paul could effect the introduction of an interpretation of the Last Supper that was opposed to the tradition which

he found prevalent, without any traces of the opposition having been preserved. And it is just by a historian that the pressing question is put, whether it is at all "historically" permissible to treat his solemn protestation in 1 Corinthians xi. 23 ff. so lightly (Harnack).

This being so, it is easy to understand that in place of treating this question from the point of view of literary criticism, has come the treatment of it from the point of view of the "History of Religions". Nay, the one way of treating it passes involuntarily into the other, as our last preceding sentences show. In the earliest period, say those of this school, the interpretation of the death of Jesus as a sacrifice may have become connected with the words of the Last Supper originally meant in another sense, as a "sort of first Good Friday sermon" to the Church, perhaps under the influence of Isaiah liii. But that, it is supposed, was not the most important factor. Blood, Forgiveness, New Covenant, "Do this in remembrance of Me," —these, it is said, all point simply to a religious feast, intelligible in the comprehensive sweep of the fusion of religions which then prevailed. The element common to the cult of the Thracian enthusiasts, to the mysteries of Mithra and ancient Semitic sacrifices, the partaking of the essence of God by blood-fellowship with Him, a mystic eating of the Godhead—that penetrated into Christianity at the very first, and was introduced more especially by Paul. Introduced without resistance, because it corresponded to the spirit of the times, it was of course spiritualized and given a moral interpretation; but yet it was an admixture of an enthusiastic-mystical, animistic-spiritistic element with the originally purely spiritual and moral Gospel. For at least in the tenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, it is added, there can be no doubt whatever that Paul speaks

of partaking of the body and blood of Christ, as of a super-sensible, spiritual substance; just as he speaks of a real partaking of the table of demons in the sacrificial feasts. We say again—in this theory the reference to the sacrificial death as the great service (Matt. xx. 28), the great act of obedience (Phil. II. 5 ff.), can quite well be recognized as one side of the matter, and relatively the higher, more spiritual side. The strong undercurrent, however, is that sense of a sacramental partaking of the Godhead which comes from the sphere of nature-religion. This twofold way of looking at the matter, one may go on to say, has since then maintained itself down through the centuries, in all conceivable forms and combinations. On the other hand, what Jesus actually intended by His parting meal, the historicity of which need not be doubted, can hardly now be learned for certain; but it was just by the adoption of such elements from the nature-religion basis, that the new spiritual and moral religion succeeded in conquering the world for itself.

It is clear that this treatment from the point of view of the history of religions on the one hand eagerly makes use of the literary treatment of the sources, and on the other hand seeks to supersede it as trivial. A truly historical treatment will be able to point out in opposition to it, that the canons of literary criticism here applied are by no means always such as hold in other departments of history. In particular, it is remarkable that the evidences of connexion with the Old Testament are set aside; e.g. in the consciousness of Paul, the "table of the Lord" is surely associated more closely with Malachi I. 12 and generally with the Israelitish views of the sacrificial feast, than with the parallel facts of the religion of Mithra. But as for the idea of prevalent syncretism on which it rests, it is the

task of New Testament theology to inquire whether it is compatible with what undoubtedly was Paul's guiding principle, viz. his idea of faith. And if this question had to be answered in the affirmative, with whatever limitations, then Protestant theology would have the right to construct its doctrine of the Supper on the basis of the main principle of the Gospel, without regard to such foreign admixtures. What was said above in reference to Baptism would hold good here also. Our Christian faith is not indissolubly dependent on the immutability of a traditional conception of this institution. But whatever may be thought of this, with regard to the *main historical question* from which we started, these devious paths have brought us to the point where with a good conscience, we may say the greatest historical probability lies on the side of the historicity of the accounts given by Mark and Paul, which corroborate one another in the main point, viz., that Jesus Himself intended to refer to His sacrificial death.

The *second question*, whether Jesus intended this ceremony to be repeated, may be dealt with much more shortly. Stress is often laid on the fact that the express command is not given by Mark. But its omission can, purely from the standpoint of historical probability, be explained quite as well from the command being unquestioned. Those who regard Mark as having been under Paul's influence, should not deny this. And the fact that the rite existed from the beginning, is quite independent of the previous question as to the content of it, and cannot be lightly passed over. The first Christians were sure that they thereby fulfilled the Lord's will ; and here doubtless in the case of the Supper it is not so easy to understand how that could be, without some expression of His will. A more im-

portant point, however, is that the ceremony itself from its very nature is an invitation; at least if it can be maintained that "He gave" is to be understood not as merely "giving away," but as "handing round to be partaken of". On all these grounds also small weight attaches to the question, whether Jesus could on that last evening have instituted a liturgical service, being, as He was, in the expectation of an early return. Such a claim does not meet the case. The "liturgical service" is read in. Until the reunion, the disciples were to do in memory of Him what He had just done. Anyone who finds that unintelligible, must also find it unintelligible that Paul, expecting as he did the early return of the Lord, should desire the Lord's Supper to be held "until He come".

But *what did Jesus do?* The answer is simpler than might appear in view of the complicated accounts. The "blood of the covenant" points the way without uncertainty. But this, which is the main thing, may in its simple grandeur and inexhaustibleness be easily undervalued, and does not appear in this the grandeur which really belongs to it, so long as our thoughts continue to be directed to something else which, for many centuries, was regarded as the chief thing. That is the gift which was presupposed, a *special gift of grace in the Lord's Supper*, namely of the body and blood of Christ, who died on the Cross, but is now glorified; and that, too, as a heavenly substance, not indeed separated from His person, but to be distinguished from it. If this idea be recognized, there arises logically the question as to the special effect of the special gift, and in particular there opens up to dialectic subtlety an unlimited field of activity because of a problem which on that assumption is equally unavoidable: How is this heavenly material related to the earthly, to the bread

and wine (cf. pp. 749 f.)? The question also as to the condition of reception is connected therewith. We recall only some of the *chief points in this history* of the Lord's Supper.

In the assumption that there is such special gift, all the Reformation Churches, Zwingli alone excepted, are in agreement with Rome. The relation of the Body and Blood of Christ to the bread and wine is for Rome, as is well known, that of magical identity (cf. p. 749). The latter are by the word of the priest changed into the former, and only the appearance of bread and wine remains,—the "accidents without the substance". This change of the elements is irrevocable: whether they be used or not, the Body and Blood of the God-man is present in them. The mystery of the Incarnation repeats itself in every Mass; so also the sacrifice of the Incarnate One. Christ and the Church at the height of their activity are one and the same. To us Protestants it seems strange that the special effect of this ineffable mystery, regarded simply as a special gift in Communion, should be one so relatively small, viz. the forgiveness of venial sins. But the reason of this is the prominence of the Sacrament of Penance on the one hand, and of the Eucharist as an offering in the Mass on the other. The weight of the total effect is thereby not lessened but increased.

In the Lutheran Church, the teaching is that this heavenly gift of the real Body and Blood of Christ is received "in, with, and under" the earthly symbols of bread and wine, which remain bread and wine. That the reception of this supernatural substance was really meant in earnest, is seen from the fact that it is distinguished from the partaking of the whole Christ by the mouth of faith, that it is expressly described as eating with the mouth, although in a supernatural manner, and

in particular that it is asserted even in the case of the unworthy. Still, in so far as this union of the sign and the thing signified exists only when the elements are in use, the boundary line of the magical is not crossed. For this, the conception of mystical immanence has been framed. While in the ancient controversies this laying down of the relation between the heavenly and the earthly material occupied the foreground, the question regarding the effect of the unique gift is really of more importance. Here now we encounter the remarkable fact (cf. p. 748) that, corresponding to the leading thought as to the fruit of the Sacraments, no essentially different fruit of the Supper is mentioned, in what our Confessions say regarding it, from that which is produced by the Word, viz. forgiveness of sins. Only the special pledge of this forgiveness Luther saw in the gift of the body and blood by means of which it is attained. "He who from the heart believes the words has what they say and as they run—forgiveness of sins." As against this definition, the Lutherans of the nineteenth century are formally in the right, when they require that the assumed special gift must have a peculiar effect. But the explanation which they themselves, combining certain later hints of Luther's with Theosophy and Romanticism, give of the effect of the body and blood of Christ upon the whole of the "psychic-corporeal matter of our being in distinction from the personality," is neither in itself clear, nor is it in the New Testament brought clearly into relation with the Supper; unless it be that the champions of this new-Lutheran doctrine make alliance with the "History of Religions" movement, which in other respects they have such an aversion to. True, the final consummation, particularly the "spiritual body," is likewise connected with communion with Christ, but not necessarily with the sacramental communion of the

body and blood of the glorified One as is here assumed, but rather with the communion with Christ realized by faith in general, or otherwise with His Spirit (cf. Phil. III. 21 ; Rom. VIII. 11).

Last century, special favour was shown by many for the revived Calvinistic doctrine, or rather the revival of some separate statements of Calvin, and indeed precisely those which are ambiguous ; according to which the believing soul is nourished from the substance of the glorified body, by being lifted up to heaven at the partaking of the symbols, or by the power of that substance casting its influence like a sunbeam from heaven. Clearly this is a compromise between Luther and Zwingli ; but just for that reason it is vague, because contradictories are conjoined. It leads therefore necessarily to the doctrine of the new-Lutherans already spoken of, if the common element of all that we have treated of so far be maintained, namely the special heavenly gift of the body and blood.

For this very thing,—that was our starting-point,—they doubtless found in the *words of institution.* Zwingli stood alone in understanding them as referring to the body broken on the Cross, and the blood there shed. And this exegesis of his gave the impression that it took away the significance of the Sacrament, because he ascribed the whole power to faith, and did not emphasize the faith-inspiring power of the act as the concrete Word ; though certainly it was his opponents' misunderstanding, when they represented that faith for him was imagination, not the reality from which he lived. This question as to the meaning of faith, we must for the present leave entirely out of account, if we wish to determine impartially the sense of the words of institution, i.e. to answer the question whether they really contain any intimation of

the special gift of the body and blood of the glorified Lord.

According to the general rules of exegesis, neither the word "is" nor the word "this" can be made the starting-point for our purpose. Not the former, because it is only the context which in every case decides whether it can or must have the sense of "signifies". And in this particular case, "is" would not necessarily make the "glorified" body and the "glorified" blood certain; nor would "signifies" necessarily exclude them. Nor can we start from the word "this". No one, it is true, would nowadays take it as Carlstadt did, as accompanied by a gesture of pointing to the actually present body of Christ; nor as Luther does, as referring to the bread and wine, including the body and blood combined "with, in and under" it ("Synecdoche," as it was called); nor with the Roman theologians, to the accidents of bread and wine which alone remained. But even if manifestly nothing can be meant thereby but the bread and wine which are handed round, the fundamental question is not yet decided. For it is still possible, taking account of the whole ceremony, to supply in thought what one believes may be understood from it, or what one believes, from otherwise established convictions, ought to be read into it. It is just in this way that most of the New Lutherans reach the goal sought by them, when conscientiousness in the matter of exegesis forbids them to follow the old paths.

Rather the words body and blood should be taken as the starting-point. These words, especially when separately mentioned, can only mean body and blood in reference to the approaching death; and in any case blood of the covenant cannot be understood otherwise. This expression, however, states still more precisely that sacrificial death and sacrificial blood are meant,

and in fact the sacrificial blood by which the new Covenant comes into existence; though the word "new" were omitted, it would make no difference to the meaning; for if by Jesus' death as a sacrifice a Covenant be ratified with God, it is in any case a new Covenant. It is that, namely, of which the prospect is held out in Jeremiah xxxi. 31 ff., the decisive presupposition of which is the forgiveness of sins, whereby the old Covenant described in Exodus xxiv. 8 is replaced and brought to an end. Whether besides this, the Paschal sacrifice and the great annual sacrifice of Atonement were conjoined in Jesus' mind with the Covenant sacrifice, as they doubtless were in the mind of the early Church (1 Cor. v. 7; Hebrews ix. 11 ff.; 1 Peter i. 19), is an inquiry of much difficulty in detail, and makes no difference to the main point; as the matter of decisive importance alluded to is likewise independent of the words "broken" and "shed". In what sense, however, Jesus' death is a sacrificial death, need not be here specially discussed. That was done when we spoke of His Work made perfect in death (cf. pp. 648 ff.). Likewise it was shown how this point of view, that Jesus' work for us before God was well-pleasing to God, falls into line in a perfectly consistent manner with the highest point of view, that in Him God works upon us. That these two ways of regarding the whole work of Jesus are one and the same, is made especially clear by the legacy of His parting Supper. The most recent expositions of the Lord's Supper are therefore quite right when they state that in the history it is regarded now as a sacrifice, now as a gift of grace, now from the point of view of a symbol, now from that of something partaken of; and indeed in all conceivable combinations of these points of view. But the chief matter is the recognition of the way in which these all cohere in

the most intimate fashion in the Supper itself when accurately understood.

Jesus then makes bread and wine the concrete symbols of His sacrificial death, whereby the new Covenant is ratified: the words spoken at the Last Supper are His last parable. But they are an acted parable: word and act are one and the same thing. And this act is not completely explained by saying that Jesus simply and sublimely bears witness to His own death and its significance. He does not merely set this forth: He gives His disciples the bread to eat, and the wine to drink. As the blessing of the sacrifice was made the possession of those who were present at the sacrificial feast, so Jesus imparts the blessing of His sacrificial death. But whatever may be thought of this connexion with Old Testament preconceptions, the fact itself is independent of it. In any case He gives the bread and the wine, which He declares to be His body and blood, to be eaten and drunk, to be personally appropriated. If we are right so far, however, that does not mean a glorified body, glorified blood, but His body given for sacrifice, His blood as blood of sacrifice, this body and this blood of course given to be partaken of not materially but spiritually; for this body and this blood were at the first celebration not yet surrendered to death, and at every subsequent one they were not present. In other words He imparts the fruit of His death as a sacrificial death, namely forgiveness of sins. To what extent He bestows along with that all the benefits which He wished to give, has been frequently expounded. But with good reason, when He speaks of the sacrifice of the New Covenant, He mentions this which is the most vital, this one thing which is everything. All other effects which in the course of history have been connected with the Lord's Supper, have their

warrant so far as they can be deduced from this main effect which is the key to the whole; in particular, that is true of the idea of fellowship. His "purpose to show compassion above all that we can understand" (Claudius), He makes effective through the form of the outward act. Let us here only recall expressly all that was said regarding the Word and the symbol of the Word. His Word in union with His Person, is the great, effective means of grace. His other parables too do not simply express a saving truth, but are means for realizing it, effecting the salvation which is thus described, the grace therein revealed because revealed in Him. But here with His Word which is embodied in the act, He gives to faith what that Word declares. And He Himself it is who gives in this manner: this effective, acted parable is His legacy.

Thus we reach a clear idea of the Lord's Supper which, by simply going back to the institution, transcends the controversies of the past, at the same time preserving and fulfilling the most vital objects for which opposing parties strive—the object of the Lutheran Church, in opposition to all fanatical depreciation of the means of grace; that of the Reformed Churches, in opposition to any thought of a saving effect apart from faith; and also, in particular, the object of the Lutherans, not to diminish the value of the Sacrament as distinguished from the Word, and that of the Reformed, to exclude even every semblance of a material gift in the Sacrament; finally, and still more definitely, the Lutheran object of maintaining the active presence of the living Christ in the means of grace, and that of the Reformed not to lose sight of the real historical Christ. "Until He come," until the consummation in another order of things, the Church and every individual member of the Church has in the Lord's Supper a guarantee given by

Himself of the appropriation of salvation through His continued personal activity.

The working of the Holy Spirit in relation to God and to the Church, as it is experienced in faith, has now been discussed in its most important aspects. It has been made clear what the Christian Church means by designating as the work of the Holy Spirit and of her Lord Jesus Christ, her assurance of salvation, which she experiences as the work of God; and by saying that for her, this work of God is His working in the Church with its means of grace. But this working of the Holy Spirit needs to be considered not only in its relation to God and to the Church, but also in its relation to the spirit of man (p. 714). This distinction is no theological subtlety, but arises out of the nature of communion with God, as understood in Christianity; viz. as personal communion between God and man, man and God.

The Holy Spirit in Relation to the Human Spirit

To speak more precisely, there are two things here to be treated of; firstly, this relationship as the *general* spiritual relationship which is always implied in communion with God; and secondly, its more particular characterization so far as it is *ethical*. This latter question falls according to tradition to be discussed in the doctrine of Grace and Freedom, to which the doctrine of Predestination belongs as an important section. The first-named question has its deepest interest in connexion with that doctrine of Grace and Freedom, because communion with God is of a personal character in the strict sense of personal and moral communion. It conduces to clearness, however, to discuss it apart from the doctrine referred to.

Mysticism

The General Question

We came upon it already where the working of the Divine Spirit was described as IMMEDIATE (pp. 716 ff.). We must now explain this more fully, in relation to the human spirit. The truth which presents hardly any obscurity for religious experience itself, has often been rendered obscure by being vaguely connected with other questions; and what may be called the general term for a crowd of vague conceptions is the word *Mysticism*. We cannot therefore avoid the discussion of it, especially as it furnishes occasion for recalling other important points of Dogmatics.

The question no doubt takes us far beyond the limits of Dogmatics. Investigations carried out with acumen have shown how the estimate of mysticism varies in characteristic fashion with the times, as does to an equal extent the meaning of that word with its multifarious senses. The last great wave of feeling against mysticism came in the eighties of last century; at present, we stand in the midst of a strong flood-tide of mystical sentiment. The mental conditions under which a great wave of the kind is possible and recurs from time to time, are always becoming clearer—a high degree of civilization which, however, does not satisfy the deepest cravings of men; a nervous, sentimental susceptibility on the part of a generation that is exhausted with work, as contrasted with the naïve, robust feeling of people who are happy in their work and blessed with clearness of thought; but at the same time, the mystical temperament is identified with the accomplishment of work of a very lofty, spiritualized type. Furthermore, the differences between modern mysticism and that of former periods are always coming more clearly to view; above all, the mind plunges into the depths of one's

own life rather than into God's. "What did he see? He saw — miracle of miracles — himself" (Novalis). "He can easily soar away into the Infinite, who has embraced it in his own Ego" (H. Hart). "Religion is nothing but the consciousness which the inner self possesses of the creation as a progressive act, of the system of forces inherent in it" (Bonus). With these utterances compare Tersteegen, even where he does not strike notes which are distinctively Christian. The trend of the modern consciousness from God to the world and to the self, is shown with special plainness in modern mysticism; although with its vagueness it may at any moment make the self and the world be submerged in God. Hence also it seeks for a positive relation to work, to morality, to science, but may take a quick turn and cause all of them to vanish again in the darkness of communion with the universe. In this we have its strength and its limitation. This general statement required to be prefixed, because otherwise the distinctively Dogmatic matter would appear to be treated within a narrow compass which would not be in keeping with the fullness of modern life.

Taken quite generally, the ideas "mystical" and "immediate" are interchangeable; the difficulty only arises when we come to define them more accurately. That is at once clear when we set forth first the use of the word which certainly has no rightful place in Christian faith. The assertion of a mystical, i.e. an immediate, relationship between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, is frequently nothing else than a *protest against the historical Revelation* as the basis and norm of our religious experience. When, namely, in preference purely individual and therefore unverifiable self-revelations of God in the human spirit, are regarded as the basis and norm, on the ground that to put a

curb on these, means to put a curb on the power, the freshness and originality of religion. Looked at more closely, two things are contained in such opinions as these. Firstly, that the content of the religious process is determined by this immediate working of God; i.e. given in it alone. From the nature of the case, that content is, it must be admitted, a very indefinite one: that is implied in the opposition to the rejected standard; although, on the other hand, a certain uniformity is ensured by the uniformity of human nature. Both points are attested by the history of mysticism, down to the new edition of the old Mystics by those of the modern time; e.g. in Boelsche's Preface to the "Wandersmann" by Cherubini. What has been characteristic at all periods is the rupture in the relation of religion to morality in the distinctively Christian sense. Secondly, that in its psychological form the religious process, as this mysticism asseverates, belongs essentially to the sacred twilight of emotion; although in individual cases there may be combined therewith the claim to individual instances of very definite knowledge. If mysticism be understood in this sense, the answer to the question as to its right in Christianity is a direct negative. The reasons for this answer were given in the Apologetics, which had one of its most worthy tasks in stating them. And the discussion of every separate Christian doctrine since has furnished a new proof of the truth of the fundamental principle then expounded.

But the word mysticism *can also be understood otherwise;* and then the question of its right is worthy of careful consideration. Again, for the sake of clearness, we distinguish what, when all is said and done, belong together, "mystical elements" in the content of our faith, and in the mode of its subjective realization.

As regards the first, it is an important inquiry whether and how far the love of the child of God to the heavenly Father, can be described as a direct relationship, apart from the relationship to the world; or expressed in terms of practice, whether and how far it can be said, "If I only have Thee, I care nothing for heaven or earth," without infringing upon the ministration of love, in the absence of which there can be no communion with the God who is love. But that is clearly a question of Christian Ethics, and so far as it belongs to Dogmatics, the decision of it has already been included in the discussion of the Christian idea of God. So also with the related inquiry how love to God is and must remain a thoroughly reverential love, opposed to all unreal intimacy, yet as lively and heartfelt as is necessarily implied in the word Love (cf. Ethics, pp. 139 ff., 163 ff.). Further when we, leaving here all that aside, fix our attention rather upon what takes place in the soul in the experience of communion with God as such, it is clear that all the problems important enough in themselves which there arise, do not fall to be discussed in this connexion. For instance, the consideration of how in the life of piety moments of quiet contemplation and absorption alternate with moments of activity: the word Mysticism has likewise been used to denote the unfettered right of the former. So also we have not here to consider the other related yet not coincident question, what degree of pure feeling in relation to the other fundamental functions of the spirit is normal: what was here defended as Mysticism was the right of strong and deep sensibility in distinction from weakness in the emotional faculty, and excited gusts of feeling. Rather have we here to define more exactly the truth already stated (pp. 716 ff.), that the personal working of God as Spirit in our spirit is not completely expressed by

the thought that the spiritual content of His life becomes alive in us; but that this thought, which is no doubt the most important one, includes also the other, that this comes about by an immediate operation of God as Spirit in our spirit. In regard to the mutual influence of men, the phrase "personal influence" has this twofold sense—quickening of the content in the mind, and quickening in the form of immediate active influence. We experience something more when we experience the influence of a person in this form of direct intercourse. Hence the longing desire to come to know personally a great man, a breath of whose spirit in its definite content we have felt. For us men this something more comes no doubt from the actual sensible presence of the individual; and at first sight it might be said that precisely for that reason there is nothing comparable in our communion with God. But the most important point in that "something more" is not the manner in which it comes, but the liveliness of the influence, which we can express only by saying that it is a direct influence. That highest experience of personal influence among men, its fullest form, appears to us only a faint likeness of the influence of God in us, and the word "immediate" too only a very insufficient word. Certainly no conception of this influence which is worthy of it is granted to us, and cannot be, for the reasons often stated; indeed, we stand here right at the centre of the one great mystery (cf. pp. 509 ff.). But the mystery ought not therefore to be denied, or to the detriment of experience set aside by phrases claiming to be "adequate," which when examined turn out to be completely inadequate. The battle-cries which are heard even yet, "The Spirit of God works only by psychological means," and, on the other hand, "He works directly," echo harmlessly past each other. The

psychological means is quite a matter of course. It can only be denied at the cost of clearness in psychology, as at the cost of an intelligent faith,—nay, at the cost of intellectual health. A crowd of terrible errors have their source in the wild idea that we can experience the influence of the Divine Spirit otherwise than through the forms of our mental life. But that does not mean that the influence is not direct. Many will assert with good reason that it is direct, and deny without reason that it comes through psychological means. Many will rightly refuse to allow doubt to be cast upon the psychological channels, and wrongly cast suspicion upon the immediacy.

But when we pronounce this judgment, it becomes at once clear what is the ultimate reason why we have to speak at all of this very confused subject; it is because the personal spiritual relationship between the Divine and the human spirit is an ethical one (p. 776). Otherwise, indeed, it would be enough to say that since the relation between the finite and the Infinite is for us incomprehensible in all respects, therefore as a matter of course all the influence which by a thousand channels the Divine Spirit exercises upon our spirit may be regarded at the same time as immediate. But we have had again and again to call to mind that Christian piety being thoroughly ethical, cannot content itself with that, just as little as it can allow itself to be led into the error of imagining itself theologically omniscient. This leads to the doctrine of

Grace and Freedom

It has, however, already been decided within what narrow limits this doctrine of grace and freedom requires to be treated in Protestant theology,—very nar-

row limits, when the *general* problem is to be discussed ; the special point reached in the *doctrine of Predestination* being dealt with at somewhat greater length. These two things ought always to be explicitly distinguished from one another. In the one case the question is, How are grace and freedom in general related, whenever they are put into relation to each other ? in the other case, Is grace the same for all ?

As to the *first question*, there is little indeed to be gained by citing the individual answers of our Confessions and theologians. Not only because as a matter of fact they are not satisfactory, but because they start with statements of the problem to which there can be no satisfactory answer at all. Their religious motive, however, is clear and enduring. The working of God must be so conceived of that Faith is really God's work ; not only not man's merit, but not in any way his work. For our Reformers, it was redemption to look away from our own doings, to let salvation come as a free gift from God alone. In what tones this assurance first made itself heard is well known. The praise of faith-inspiring Grace is the Reformation Song of Songs. It seemed to ring forth in the purer and the fuller notes, the more absolutely Grace was exalted as the sole active agency, and free will condemned as " empty falsehood ". It was not intended thereby to deny that man's unbelief was really man's sin. On the contrary, responsibility was unsparingly driven home. On a previous page we had to note how unhistorical it is to identify the Reformation principle of the omnipotence of Divine grace with modern Determinism (cf. Doctrine of Sin, pp. 478 ff.). At this point it is even more evident than it was there, that that introduces a disturbing element not only into their theology but into their deepest experience. The old Protestant theologians meant to retain this

self-consistent twofold motive of the new experience of the Gospel ; but when they came to carry it out in logical thought, they became entangled, as the last of our Confessions shows, in manifest contradictions. In order to preserve responsibility, they said and rightly said that Grace did not work irresistibly. But when it came to making this concession clear, their anxiety for the fundamental idea that faith was in truth God's work, gained the upper hand. Hence the operation of God was again described in such terms as to make it after all irresistible. The natural man is compared to " stocks and stones " ; nay, he is worse than these because he can be rebellious, or rather as unregenerate must be rebellious. In short, at this point man was depreciated below his proper worth. It makes no difference, at least so long as we keep to the basis of the old way of looking at things, that even finer distinctions are introduced ; as that the power of believing is given to man, and that he can now by means of this power gifted to him lay hold of the grace which is offered. It is noteworthy that corresponding to this depreciation there was on another matter too high an appreciation. The will of the regenerate or converted person co-operates with Divine grace. That was clearly a good Roman idea, although of course the connexion with the idea of merit was broken. And now we have come to the reason why all these attempts necessarily ended in failure. Grace and Freedom were regarded as formerly in the pre-Reformation theology as two homogeneous, co-operating, natural forces.

All that we have to do is to bring out the full truth of this *fundamental religious principle*, conscious that it takes us to the limits of our knowledge, and why it does so. In reality, we have already spoken of both these questions several times. We must therefore be content

with saying that faith is God's work in us, and that the same faith is yet the highest act of our freedom, as testified by the feeling of responsibility. All that was said in expounding the doctrine of sin finds here its most important application. The confession, "Not of my own reason or strength," is no religious hyperbole but simple truth. Only the Holy Spirit of God, in union with the Gospel as we have expounded, produces faith. This working of His is with reason described as creative. The natural will in reality can neither "help, co-operate nor intend". Nay, the impressions and manifestations of the gracious Will of God are in the strict sense "unavoidable". We are "apprehended" (Phil. III. 12) of the Gospel and through it of the Spirit of the living God, or, combining in one word the two things in their inseparable union, of Christ. He produces faith by His personal working, Himself making the content of His personal life actual in us,—all these words being understood in the sense in which they were explained by us above, in speaking of the content and form of the working of God as Holy Spirit, both in regard to its relation to God and to the Church, and also to the human spirit. Only by such creative working of God does faith arise and persist. "God works in us both to will and to do" (Phil. II. 12 f.). Even the expression is not too strong that we have "to allow ourselves to live". Paul also says something of the kind about himself, and A. H. Francke thinks "he only looked on at God's work". But such expressions must not be misunderstood. To these "unavoidable" impressions we surrender ourselves, or we resist them, refuse them. In this sense the unavoidable impressions are not irresistible. It is just by them that we are summoned, awakened, to free decision, nay, are made capable of it. Made capable of it, not as if a secret, natural power of our soul, which

we name our freedom, were let loose ; but rather because, just as all moral decisions are possible only by reason of impressions of a superior personality, so the highest moral decision for or against God, the freedom which is really serious, is only possible by reason of this active, gracious will of God. "God works," is the ground for the command, "work out your own salvation," but the ground is not understood in the sense of natural causality. As we experience this relation of the Divine will to our will in a pale image, when we find ourselves privileged to lead others to independence of will, that liberating work of God is as far intelligible to us as it requires to be, if it is not to appear to us a contradiction ; but is likewise only so far intelligible as it can be to us, without its becoming something totally different from what it is meant to be.

But we must now point out that we stand here again before the one mystery which is and must remain the mystery of our existence itself. It is doubly necessary to remember this here, that we may not give rise to the imagination even, that there may be after all an ultimate stage of knowledge which might give the solution of that mystery. Such a solution could only result in doing harm to our real knowledge of the real state of the case, of faith on the basis of the saving revelation of God. In order not to fall a prey to this temptation, but rather consciously to guard ourselves against it, we must in this connexion conquer all scruples against laying down these definite propositions as to grace and freedom ; just as we laid down those regarding the "immediate" working of God, which are themselves necessary, as was shown, mainly for the sake of the present propositions. Necessary, because clearness of knowledge, though it can by no means produce life, contributes greatly to its health. The necessity in this

particular case, for instance, is shown by the fact that in the present time, sayings of Luther against freedom are not infrequently lauded, but are understood in a sense contrary to that of the Reformer. The thoroughgoing inquiries which have been directed quite recently to what, it will be admitted, is the greatest work on "Grace and Freedom," Luther's "De servo arbitrio," might have shown on the contrary that in the matter of faith, the position which he accepts in his heart is determined in the sense described above. His inference from one's own assurance of salvation that the work of God in unbelievers is irresistible, has simply to be given up, as a proposition which is not proved by Luther, and cannot be proved at all. But his striking discovery of the creative character of grace requires to be positively defined, in applying his ideas regarding the incommensurability of love and merit,—this relation being doubly noticeable as between Divine love and human merit,—but also regarding the necessarily voluntary nature of every real relation of love, as being personal; a peculiarity which Luther describes in such a telling manner, where he is not carried away by that above-mentioned unprovable proposition to contradictory conclusions. All that was set forth when we dealt with the nature of sin attains its full significance only in the present connexion. What we recognized as the chief sin of all, as personal guilt, was the false assertion of self, as if we belonged to ourselves, not to the Creator; our ability to renounce this false self-assertion is the work of God's creative, gracious will; for the attitude we assume towards that will, we are ourselves responsible. Thus far the religious knowledge we possess as Christians extends. Then what is still remaining is that one necessary mystery of our existence which was alluded to. And in truth, it is just this that Luther says in his re-

markable closing exposition on the subject of the "Light of Glory," an exposition which can be fully appreciated only from this point of view. (The whole problem of Freedom is dealt with in "Ethics," pp. 76 ff. Only by means of this more comprehensive treatment does that which appears above reach its completion).

It is now clear that the question of PREDESTINATION was rightly described above as a second question. Certainly it is at one particular point most closely connected with the first; but, taken up prematurely in connexion with it, the doctrine of Predestination becomes confused and the real idea of it is not even recognized. So far we have been occupied with the question of how God's gracious working and human freedom are related to one another, when they are viewed as coming into relationship at all. The question now is whether God's grace extends its operation equally to all. The necessity of asking this question is the real reason for a doctrine of predestination being included in Christian Theology. This simple truth, however, requires proof, and the proof appears when we look at the *other grounds* on which such a doctrine is often mainly brought forward. There are three besides the one we have just mentioned. One of them, to which the doctrine owes its usual name of Predestination, or *Fore-ordination*, is the question as to the relation of the Eternal God to time, as to the realization of His eternal counsel in time; a problem which belongs rather to philosophy, and the scope of which in its bearing on Dogmatics has been already discussed (pp. 509 ff.). It is different with the source of this doctrine, which is expressed by the Biblical term *Election*, viz. the certainty of faith that salvation has its ground in the eternal Love of God,—eternal in the sense of unchangeable. In that question faith has certainly a living interest. Without that anchor it were

irretrievably shipwrecked upon the sea of doubt, and there would be no *assurance of salvation.* The word Election has of course a history in Scripture itself, and there is certainly another thought expressed by it. At first, indeed, this is more prominent; viz. the thought of unmerited preference. Israel was elected from among the other nations, and that without contributing itself to the issue, by God's free grace, to be God's peculiar people. But the immediate fruit of that for the faith of the chosen people, is the confidence that this God who has chosen them will not forsake them: it is the assurance of salvation. That remains the chief point, even when election comes to be regarded not as an historical act of God merely, but as an eternal decree, and when not only the nation but the individual is regarded as included in this decree of God. Indeed, these changes in the idea of election serve only to strengthen this fundamental idea of assurance of salvation. Moreover, in the New Testament it now becomes an election in Christ, completely determined by Him (Eph. i. 4 and parall.). Those who believe in Him know themselves as elect; their partaking of salvation is founded upon the eternal decree of God. Whether they as distinguished from others are partakers of salvation, whether they therefore are elect in this sense as opposed to the non-elect, has in itself nothing to do with this triumphant certainty that they are hidden in the eternal counsel of God. And just as little has this assurance of salvation to do in itself with the question of the manner of God's saving operation, with the relation between *grace and freedom;* except in the sense which was defined above, that faith is God's work, without our responsibility being thereby denied, but rather enforced. A metaphysical conclusion as to the exclusive efficacy of Divine grace, one which would go beyond

the proposition stated, has no significance for our experience of the assurance of salvation. Nevertheless these two points of view, election out of the whole, and the absolute operation of grace, came to be of decisive import for the doctrine of Predestination. The first is here the more essential, but the second, for reasons which are historically intelligible, has for long been inseparably connected with it. We must call to mind why and how it has so come about.

Examination of the thought of election, in the sense of being God's people by an eternal act of God's will, must recognize the *fact* that *by no means all* have this experience. Now of course all that a Calvin has to say about the view that the thought of the non-elect deepens one's own assurance of salvation, and one's sense of God's compassion as also of our humiliation and of His glory, is really a confusion of ideas that are essentially heterogeneous. It is no doubt a horrible assertion to make, that the blessedness of the elect is increased by a comparison with the lost; and even the statement that they are thereby made more deeply thankful is only right when most carefully guarded. But the fact referred to is itself in the highest degree impressive. In God's work of salvation as it can be known by us, there are unquestionably great differences to be observed, both within the Christian Church and without it. They are found within the Church, so far as differences of religious capacity, education and guidance are not to be referred to the will of the individuals concerned. And they are found without the Church, in so far as whole peoples and periods are left untouched by the Spirit and Word of God. *Reflection upon this fact is the real root of the doctrine of Predestination.* By this fact, thought which aims at the explanation of things as they actually are is led to ask

the question : Have these undeniable differences their ground only in the realization in time of God's Will to save, which in itself extends to all ? or is God's eternal will to save directed in itself only to a part of the race ? Very instructive it is to note that even Calvin, with all his love for bringing forward the other points of view, yet at the commencement of his decisive passage points to the line of thought we have indicated ("Inst. Rel. Chr." III. 21). And we of the present day, with our wider knowledge of the variety in the world of the lifeless, with our deeper insight into the intricate connexions which are there observed, stand with new interest face to face with the same thought. Nearer to us rather than farther away lies the doubt whether all are called to the highest end, whether countless numbers be not by nature and training ordained to pass away, not indeed without a share in separate benefits and an average of joy in life, but without being able to reach the highest good ; so that in them there would be only a preparation and presupposition for the true manhood which wins the highest good. When, however, this thought once took root, the *other thought regarding grace and freedom* was naturally combined with it. When one knew oneself to be saved, and saw others close at hand without this experience, it was an easy step, under the conditions of religious knowledge at that former time, to set in the place of the experience of effective grace the dogmatic proposition as to irresistibly effective grace, and partly by it to explain the observed difference among men. Conversely, when one believed that the gracious will of God should be thought of as extended to all, it was natural to see in the free choice of men the reason of their exclusion from salvation ; though a satisfactory definition of the relation between grace and freedom could not be found.

These considerations arising out of the matter itself give us the proper *arrangement* for the many answers to the question of Predestination which have appeared in history. We recall that the one root of it, the problem of God's fore-knowledge, is subsidiary and has already been discussed. The second, the thought of Election, is of the greatest importance, but in itself it has nothing to do either with the general or with the special gracious will. Consequently there remain for us only the two last-mentioned roots, reflection upon the actual differences in the offer of salvation, and the question connected with that as to the relation of grace and freedom; the first being for us the main point. But then, out of the combination of these two grounds arise the following possible positions with regard to the question. The Will of God to save is as regards its compass applied to all or only to some: it is universal or particular. According to the degree, or the intensity of the act of Will, it is absolute or relative (hypothetical); i.e. it is either alone operative, so that all human activity is only a form of its operation, or it varies in effectiveness according to the degree of human receptivity. Thus arise four possibilities. First, the saving will of God operates universally and absolutely: He determines salvation for all and realizes it in every case. Secondly, the saving will of God operates universally and relatively: He wills that help should come to all; but whether they all allow themselves to be helped is their affair. Thirdly, the saving will of God operates particularly and absolutely: He determines that only a part of mankind shall be saved; but in them He brings it to pass without fail. Fourthly, the saving will of God operates particularly and relatively: He offers His salvation earnestly to a part of the human race; but whether the offer has its

full effect upon them depends upon their own capacity for receiving it. Now the last-mentioned possibility is in itself on evident grounds foreign to religious thought. For that reason, and also because it has never in the history of dogma been seriously put forward, it falls out of further discussion. To call the three others, however, thus shortly to mind helps to a knowledge of the matter; and now we see that *particular and absolute Predestination* is historically the most important.

In this doctrine the emphasis lies on the absoluteness of grace. It was so in the case of Augustine the author of it, and completely so in the case of our Reformers. "By grace only," was what they meant to insist on. In opposition to the doctrine of the importance of human liberty in its co-operation with grace, which in the Catholic Church had tended more and more to displace Augustine's doctrine of grace; in opposition to this moralizing, irreligious doctrine of freedom, which endangered Christianity as a religion, they revived, together with Augustine's conception of grace, his idea of Predestination likewise. Nay more, as in their hands the former became more profound, they took higher ground with the latter also, at least to some extent. Not only, according to them, are those saved whom God of His unfathomable compassion has chosen from all eternity, the lost not being in the same way fore-ordained by God to condemnation, but consigned to the destruction which they merited owing to the Fall of the first man. Rather are election and rejection based upon an eternal decree; this being so completely the case that even the Fall of men in Adam is referred by Calvin to Divine fore-ordination. And the history of dogma shows how strictly the thought of all the Reformers adhered originally to Predestination, and how in the case of Luther at his later period we

cannot say that the doctrine was abandoned, but only that it was put in the background. Just here, however, in these extreme statements it is clear that what faith really clings to with inward sympathy, is the belief that salvation is due to the operation of divine grace alone, not that this grace is restricted to certain persons; i.e. it clings to the "absoluteness," not to the "particularity". For if the latter were the important point, then it would have had to be admitted that the rejected are lost because God predestinates them to unbelief without guilt on their part. But this was always denied: it is their own fault that they are lost. Yet as the Reformers, in contrast to modern Determinists, assert this with great earnestness (cf. pp. 478 f.), we may also conclude that their scattered expressions regarding the exclusive operation of grace do not themselves give complete expression to the new experience, but are coloured by the traditional doctrine of grace and freedom (cf. pp. 782 ff.). But then the further question arises, why this association of "absolute" and "particular" should have been continued at all, and the same answer may be given. Tradition was too strong, so long as there was not yet a method of intellectual inquiry more in conformity with the nature of saving faith. In addition to this there was a special objection, strengthened by opposition to the doctrine of purgatory, to any widening of the range of the doctrine of the Last Things, and to the opening up of hope for those who in the present life are passed over by grace. Then too of course all attempts to bring this restriction of the decree of salvation into harmony with the Christian idea of God, with the saving power of the Redeemer, and with the Protestant conception of the Church, were necessarily unsuccessful. It is therefore not to be wondered at that, as a rule, the

more seriously the doctrine of absolute particular Predestination is taken, the more emphatically is it asserted to be a mystery, from which only impious presumption would seek to lift the veil. But this assurance is not pacifying, even though there is connected with it an appeal to Holy Scripture, which is of great importance, especially with Calvin. The mystery comes in at the wrong place, at a point on which, if we are to speak seriously of Revelation at all, the Revelation must throw light; the mystery having reference, namely, to the saving will of God. At this point it is unbearable; at that other point, on the contrary, it is bearable, where we consider the limitations of our insight into the realization of this saving will. We have stated in the strongest possible terms that we here come upon problems which for us at the present are insoluble, problems so difficult that we can by reason of them understand how the long-ridiculed thought of particular Predestination can for a time recommend itself to modern thought. In regard to them, however, we can practise a sober restraint, and leave the solution of them to other than earthly theology. For the doctrine of particular Predestination this comfort fails us.

If the gracious will of God be thought of as in the theory we have been speaking of, as absolute in its operation, but, contrary to it, as in extent directed to all, it must above all be clearly held in view that this *absolute Universalism* only differs in reality from absolute particularism, if the necessary premise in Eschatology be fully and without reserve accepted. In other words, we must recognize a continued development, under other conditions of existence than those of this earth. For without this premise, those of course among the people passed over and lost on the earth who never come to the goal, are eternally lost. Schleiermacher's

finely thought out exposition of the doctrine, for instance, leaves us therefore unsatisfied. He considers that Christian sympathy can quite well be content that a part of the race should be passed over temporarily, but not that they should be excluded from salvation altogether, because this is contrary to the unity of the idea of God, as well as to the solidarity of the race. But by the undecided position with regard to future hope, by the swaying dialectic of "the prophetic doctrine of the consummation of salvation," that hope which Christian faith had whispered becomes the cold idea, that God "out of the whole mass calls forth the completed whole of the new creation"; i.e. Universalism is given up. It is characteristic, therefore, with what zeal others, e.g. O. Pfleiderer, in immediate connexion with their doctrine of the gracious will of God as actually extended to all, proceed to emphasize the consummation of the Kingdom of God, not only in the form of development, but also in that of the close of earthly development and the coming of a new world.

This absolute Universalism has always found its most ardent adherents, apart from speculative theologians, in that section of the religious community which treasured as the special tenet of their faith, often from the nature of the case as an esoteric doctrine, the restoration of all things, and the final blessedness of all created spirits. The discussion of it belongs to Eschatology. Here it is enough to state that in the theory of absolute Universalism, the Universalism doubtless is consonant to the Christian idea of God and the Christian sympathy inspired by that idea, but that the absoluteness of God's operation here asserted, in this as in the first theory goes beyond the testimony of religious experience as formed under the guidance of Revelation, and endangers the ethical character of our religion. As

in the one case, logical thinking requires personal guilt to be excluded, though in defiance of the theory it is always asserted, this occurs in the other case with regard to personal faith. The acceptance or non-acceptance of salvation becomes a natural process.

The last of the possibilities above mentioned, *relative Universalism*, corresponds to the nature of the Gospel by its full recognition of the universal gracious will of God, as of the moral conditions of its realization. It is God's will that all men should have help extended to them. But it is also His will that they should allow themselves to be assisted : their will remains a personal will, and is not made a natural compulsion. It must be admitted, however, that the forms in which this standpoint has been presented in the past are all of them imperfect. First of all, the ancient Greek doctrine, according to which God foreknew the free choice of each individual, and according to His foreknowledge chose one and rejected another. Similarly, the early Protestant theologians made election dependent upon the foreseen faith of the elect. The general "prevenient" will of God is the will to help all. But this becomes a special "subsequent" will, through the foreknowledge of the belief or unbelief of individuals, and becomes thereby election and reprobation. On this theory, personal faith instead of God's grace is the ground of election, or at any rate it is difficult to deny the danger of its being so interpreted ; and thus the comfort of the belief in election is shattered. This interest is better served by the statements of the Formula of Concord. The distinction which it draws between God's foreknowledge which extends to all, and eternal Predestination or election which has reference to the faithful, appears indeed, so far as words go, to be the same as what we have just characterized as unsatis-

factory when laid down by the theologians. But its intention is more clearly to affirm Election as the only ground of salvation, and to bring out in all seriousness the guilt of those who are lost. In that case, however, the doctrine of grace and freedom assumed in the Formula of Concord, must be worked out anew from the main ideas of the Gospel, as has been done above; else the personal guilt of the lost can only be affirmed in words. But in particular, as regards the Universalism, the narrowness of the eschatological outlook must be broken through. For if the offer of salvation be confined to this world, then we simply cannot speak of a serious offer made to all.

Thus by calling to mind the history of the doctrine of Predestination, i.e. the fact that we have exhausted the possibilities which are open from the standpoint once taken up, we are led back to the position from which we started, and shown that this starting-point is itself wrongly selected. Not that the questions here discussed are altogether worthless. But some of them can only be answered when considered from quite a different point of view; and some of them in any case do not belong to the doctrine of Election. This is, as we have shown above, a doctrine of Assurance of Salvation, and as such will occupy us further when we come to speak presently of the saving work of God in us, viz. Faith. The recognition of this fact must not for Protestant theology be obscured by the circumstance, that this conjunction of ideas of different kinds which has been carried out in the history of theology, is already begun in passages here and there in Holy Scripture. In particular, Romans IX. speaks in clear terms of an election of some and a hardening of others, of absolute particular Predestination; although certainly the aim of the whole passage in chapters IX.-XI. is to be

regarded much more as a magnificent justification of God's ways in reference to the guidance of nations to salvation, and chapter x. with equal clearness treats unbelief as sin, while chapter xi. glories in the Universalism of the Divine counsel of love. Hence these chapters have been cited for the support of quite contradictory doctrines of Predestination. In reality the fate of such dogmatic exegesis is a specially clear proof of the necessity of the principles which we laid down for the use of Scripture.

In what precedes, we have treated the subject of Predestination as it appears as one of the doctrines in the system of Christian truth. But this treatment of it reminds us itself, if by nothing else by the number of points in the traditional doctrine which had to be ruled out, that the idea of Predestination is a much wider question, and is the nucleus of a series of the deepest and most difficult problems of human thought. It is, if we may put it shortly, the expression of the antinomy between the true ideal good and unintelligible reality. It has been finely brought out how only naked Pantheism on the one side and pure indeterministic Moralism on the other, are not troubled by this problem; for which reasons it for a long time fell into the background in the development of the modern consciousness, but now forces itself anew to the front, and pervades even purely metaphysical and epistemological investigations (E. Troeltsch). Such discussions, when pursued to any depth, lead by an inner necessity to the religious problem, and end in the thought of the unfathomable nature of the ultimate ground of all reality in its union with the chief good. What form this thought assumes in Christianity has been discussed under the Doctrine of God, the Doctrine of the World and Providence, and finally in a definite application here under Predes-

tination. But it serves indirectly to confirm what was said in all these places, when, as we have just indicated at least, even independently of the religious question, this insistent problem becomes to the thought of our time more and more clearly an insoluble one, and we may say again the one insoluble problem (cf. pp. 509 ff. and parallel statements). Then, too, one pronounces judgment with more intelligence and justice on paradoxical statements of the teachers of Predestination, a Calvin and a Luther; e.g. on Calvin's language with regard to God's righteousness, to the effect that a thing is right because God wills it, not that He wills it because it is right. But a like judgment is reached with reference to the extraordinary power which this doctrine imparted to its adherents, to that exalted aristocracy whose patent was the belief in Election—freedom from anxiety, courage, disregard for Utopian schemes for making the world happy, and a superabundant zeal for God's glory which no doubts could repress (cf. K. Holl on Calvin).

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, I.E., FAITH

This heading needs explanation. It seems to promise less than is customary in this connexion, in mentioning nothing but faith. Is not the Church at least a work of the Spirit; and if one considers the individual members of it, does one not find a wealth of holy and blessed results of the Spirit's operation? Certainly the Church is His Work. But as was shown above (pp. 723 ff.), so far as it is as a work of the Holy Spirit also His instrument, it belongs according to the guiding point of view there laid down to the operation of the Spirit. The question, however, in what way

the believers are formed into such a community, belongs not to Dogmatics but to Ethics, except in so far as this question has the sense—What does it mean that the Holy Spirit makes them believers, produces faith in them? which is just what we are about to speak of. Of the wealth of blessings which Christians possess in faith, enough has already been said: the whole Doctrine of God, of Christ, and of the Spirit was understood to testify to nothing else. But we have not yet spoken of what it means that these blessings are appropriated through faith, that believers as believers possess them. "God and Faith belong together:" this saying of Luther's, which was our guiding star in the Doctrine of God, must be so to us even more here at the close; and thus confirm still more the inner unity and completeness of the Protestant system. Christian Dogmatics has really no other purpose than to show how God becomes ours through faith. However devious and intricate the paths often seem, the goal is simple. That should appear even externally in the arrangement. *God produces Faith. Nothing else? No; for faith is everything.* The rich and profound activity of faith in Christian Life, however, belongs to Ethics to describe; or in other words, the latter shows how far faith is a stimulus and source of power for the new moral life in all its fundamental relations. And at this point, the advantage of treating Dogmatics and Ethics as a unity is specially great: the separation of them makes Christian faith far too often fail to appear in all its richness.

It is then only necessary to add one thing. By its content as trust in the God of Love, faith is not limited to this present life; it extends beyond it, transcends death. In so far Christian Faith becomes *Christian Hope;* and that is treated under the so-called Doctrine

of the Last Things, or Eschatology. It lies in the nature of the questions that here arise that this Doctrine of Christian Hope cannot in a direct way make the same impression of completeness and simplicity. It is all the more necessary to emphasize at the outset that in its essential nature it is nothing more than an exposition of the great but simple idea of faith on one definite side. But now faith, apart from this express reference to the future, consequently as the work of the Holy Spirit conceived now in this present, is on grounds to be immediately expounded, *justifying faith from the point of view of assurance of salvation.* Therefore we distinguish in this last section on Faith, simply justifying faith, that which is assured of salvation, or justification by faith, and the faith which hopes for the consummation, which is assured of this consummation, or the Christian Hope. The first point, the idea of justification, will be made most clear by prefixing a critical consideration of that conception under which it has been customary to describe the operations of the Holy Spirit in individuals,—viz. the *Scheme of Salvation.*

Justifying Faith

The so-called Scheme of Salvation

We must admit that the number and order of the ideas which were treated of under this heading vary in particular cases. It will be sufficient to call to mind the formula, — Call, Enlightenment, Conversion, Regeneration, Justification, Mystical Union, Renewing, Sanctification, Glorification. The artificiality with which this scheme of salvation was founded upon the passage, Acts xxvi. 17 f., is as it were a symbol of the artificiality of it in general. Many of these ideas are indefinite or ambiguous, as for instance Conversion and

Regeneration. Their mutual relations are often not clear, either when we think of how they stand to one another, or when we view them in reference to Baptism. The whole extended enumeration is a continual danger to the simplicity of the new life, which is not diminished but only brought to view by the remark, that the arrangement is one in thought rather than actually in time. Above all, we must in emphatic terms utter another warning here. Subjects and questions which are quite distinct from one another, and which belong to different sections of Dogmatics, or do not belong to Dogmatics at all, are here mixed up together, till the tangle can scarce be unravelled. Call and Enlightenment, not to mention their being unnaturally separated from one another, manifestly do not belong to this section, but are designations of the grace of God as it operates in the means of grace. If, however, it be said further that besides that, there is expressed by these terms the beginnings of the working of grace in man, in distinction from its working which has decisive effect, this defence only occasions another misgiving; and it is also aroused by the fact that by Regeneration and Sanctification, the course of the new life in time is likewise found to be expressed, only now the difference is noted between the work of grace which has decisive effect and the further development of it. For, as will be admitted, it is quite doubtful,—at all events the point has by no means been decided yet,—whether this matter of the course in time ought to be discussed in Dogmatics at all. Besides, there is a further scruple. Many, in fact the most, of these ideas without doubt are used to describe the content of the salvation which God bestows on us. This content we have often spoken of already. But whether we should treat of it in this part, employing the expression "Scheme of Salvation,"

from the point of view which we here necessarily take up,—this is not proved. The reverse is at first sight more probable, seeing that in this "Scheme of Salvation," the thought of justification by faith, which for our Reformers was of decisive importance, appears as one among many others in an extended series.

One of the chief reasons for the unsatisfactory form which this whole doctrine of the Work of God in Man took in the hands of our theologians, although the central truth of the Reformation was in question, has rightly been found in the circumstance that the expositions of it were undertaken essentially as a polemic against the traditional views; so that the setting of the problems was frequently adopted from opponents, instead of arising naturally out of the new experience. That is true, for instance, of the fitting in of justification into a process of salvation. In general, however, quite apart from the polemic, tradition continued to exert an influence, and became more than ever a fetter. That is especially the case with the use of Biblical expressions which, originally coined for very different circumstances, became only the more inappropriate, the more earnestly the processes they were used to designate were advocated. Such was the fate, for example, of the word Conversion. Originally it was used of those who came over to Christianity from Judaism or Heathenism, but had long been transferred to those who had grown up in the Church. But it was the Protestant conception of faith as personal faith, that first laid bare the difficulties which could be hidden from view under the Catholic conception. A glance at the history of Pietism up to the modern movement for fuller sanctification, may make this statement clear.

The recognition of the errors in the doctrine of the scheme of Salvation and the source of them shows us,

however, at the same time what is the task before us. So far as the ideas which have been enumerated belong to the doctrine of the operation of the Holy Spirit, they have been treated already. So far as they have reference to the question of the development of the new life, they serve to make the answer to the question of the boundary between Dogmatics and Ethics more complete than it could formerly be. So far as they give expression to the content of the work of salvation, that work must receive the expression which is appropriate for Dogmatics. Consequently it is only the two last-mentioned points that require further discussion.

The FIRST of them can soon be settled. With great fineness of thought Schleiermacher reduced the confusing multiplicity in the series of the scheme of Salvation to the two simple *points of view of the beginning and continuance*, and named the first Regeneration, the latter Sanctification. Now this reduction is without doubt a great improvement, however many questions may arise in distinguishing between beginning and continuance themselves (cf. Ethics, pp. 195 ff.). But the right of this thought to a place in Dogmatics is by no means made evident. According to all that we have said from the very first concerning Dogmatics and Ethics, we must rather give it a place in Ethics. That is where it belongs, together with the whole inquiry as to the attainment of Salvation in the course of man's life on earth. The task of Dogmatics is finished, when it has been shown what sort of Salvation we become personally possessed of through faith in God's gracious revelation (cf. p. 594). There is naturally involved in that, what is understood when it is supposed that the idea of Regeneration should likewise be treated in Dogmatics, though the matter can never be made plain without bringing forward a whole class of ideas which un-

doubtedly belong to Ethics. Thus we come now to the SECOND of the above-mentioned problems, which arose out of the criticism of the doctrine of the scheme of Salvation.

The most of the ideas which are collected in it express, as we saw, the content of Christian salvation in its various aspects,—Enlightenment, Justification, Regeneration, Conversion, Renewal, Sanctification. Now Schleiermacher attempted here also to simplify matters, by expounding the idea of Regeneration, which appeared above as a designation of the Beginning, along two lines, as respects its content which he defined in accordance with his doctrine of the Work of Christ. He expounded it, namely, as Conversion and as Justification ; i.e. "as an altered mode of life," repentance and faith, and "as an altered relation" of man to God. In this skilful construction, not only is the intention to introduce luminous simplicity meritorious, but also in particular the demonstration of God's working in subjective experience, of Regeneration as "an altered mode of life," and likewise the comprehension in one idea, consciously and unflinchingly carried out, of the operation of Christ and the operation of the Holy Spirit. Both had been, in a way which was contrary to experience, quite too long neglected. Complete acceptance, however, Schleiermacher's attempt could not obtain. True, when his followers neglected as they often did the demonstration of God's operation in personal experience, and lauded in high-sounding phrases, as some of them did, Justification as God's act, without indicating the signs by which the experience of it can be demonstrated, this was nothing less than retrogression, and that, too, not only as compared with Schleiermacher, but as compared with the fundamental purpose of the Reformation. But in Schleiermacher's attempt itself there were not only

single expressions which had little power to produce conviction, such as, for example, the use of the word Conversion in Dogmatics, which a finer feeling for the right use of words assigns more and more to Ethics. One of the main objections was with good reason connected just with the merit which we pointed out : it might be seriously doubted whether, in the new relation to God which he designated Justification, the full objectivity of Divine grace found adequate expression ; although the reason of the defect lay in the idea of God, rather than in the doctrine we are at present considering. All the more because Schleiermacher, in expounding his idea of justification in accordance with his doctrine of the work of Christ, had not preserved that independence for the forgiveness of sins as removal of guilt, which it had in the experience of the Reformers. To improvement in this point the efforts of succeeding theologians were therefore rightly directed. A distinction was drawn, say, between Justification or Reconciliation and Regeneration or Redemption (Renewal) (J. Kaftan), and the former was used to denote the annulling of the guilt of sin, the latter, the breaking down in principle of the power of sin, the implanting of the new life. Or the whole saving operation of God was named Regeneration, but within it a distinction was drawn between Justification, i.e. forgiveness and sonship, on the one hand, and the sanctifying influence of the Spirit, the implanting of the new religious and moral personality, on the other (Reischle). Attempts of that kind attain the object the more nearly, the more they are able to bring out the decisive importance of the forgiveness of sins, and at the same time the inseparable connexion of it with the new life, and the more they give expression in this matter to the original Reformation sense of the idea of justification, namely the interest in assurance of

salvation therein expressed. In what follows, too, quite the same thing is attempted, only with a limitation which is made necessary by a view previously expressed, viz. in the Doctrine of the work of Christ (pp. 588 ff.). For the fact cannot here be concealed any more than it could there, that no vocabulary which is in some measure agreed upon exists, and that the matter, therefore, will be more advantaged by dropping the ambiguous terms. Happily the matter itself is far above the strife of words. So far as it is still in dispute, however, the knowledge of it will be more surely advanced without the disputed words.

Thus by our criticism of the traditional "Scheme of Salvation," we have returned with clarified ideas to the point which we had reached above (p. 801). The Protestant conception of the idea of faith alone remains to be discussed; what it means to attain salvation through faith, whether the content of that salvation be designated Justification, Reconciliation, Redemption, Regeneration or Renewal; and whatever be the relations of these words to one another. Through faith is this salvation real to us, and therefore according to all that has been said, it is the reality of the living God in us. But the decisive point of view from which this saving operation of God in us, saving trust, must be regarded at the close of our Dogmatic system, is for us Protestants undoubtedly that of *Assurance of Salvation;* and this point of view is attested by none of these words which are ambiguously used in concrete cases, more naturally than by the one which could never quite be fitted into the Scheme of Salvation, just because it expressed rather the prevailing and fundamental point of view; viz. the word *Justification.* For this reason, even the idea which is otherwise most frequently made prominent, Regeneration, must take a secondary place; while the others mentioned above,

were it only from the uncertainty in the linguistic usage, are less to be recommended.

Justification by Faith

must therefore be the heading of this section. To bring out most clearly, however, the enduring value of the idea of Justification, we must give a short HISTORICAL RÉSUMÉ.

If we have regard to the *content* of the saving operation of God which is extolled as Justification, there is no doubt that in the older Confessions it is conceived of entirely as a unity, though for our thought it is resolved into different elements. The inmost kernel of it is the annulling of guilt, forgiveness, pardon. But this expression, at first sight negative, has a thoroughly positive meaning: there is no forgiveness with God which is not adoption into sonship to Him. And certain as it is that by that phrase is implied in principle a new relation between God and man, and one, too, which depends entirely upon God, it is equally certain that with no less reality there is laid down in principle a change in the attitude of the believer. In other words, not only is the guilt of sin annulled, but also the power of it, in all its fundamental relations,—to God, to the sinner's fellow men, to his own nature and to the world —is broken. Only when this gracious act of God is called Justification, the emphasis is meant to be placed upon the point that it concerns a believer who can rest his assurance of it upon nothing but God's grace alone; and that for that reason, it is essentially nothing but pardon and adoption, certain though it be that this pardon and adoption are always accompanied by renewal. Just for that reason the process is described as a judgment of acquittal.

In the older Confessions *another* important point is

equally clear. It needs not to be stated—this is implied in what has just been said—that this justification is something objective; rather it has the strongest possible degree of objectivity that faith knows, being God's decision, a judgment before the heavenly tribunal where alone the decision lies. But this most objective occurrence, possessing in God the fullest reality, is represented in its subjective effects as an act of God which is capable of being experienced in the inmost recesses of personal life, or more exactly as constituting that life.

With this again is connected even a *third* point. Justification does not appear in the older Confessions so much as a single act of God's grace, which of necessity stands clearly out in consciousness distinct from all the other elements in it. Nor is it more real in a life which turns by a sudden conversion from darkness to light, than in a life which runs a quiet course in its inner history. It is the one anchor of assurance for all without distinction.

How these three important points were conceived of in the great early Reformation period, is shown by linguistic usage which, varying often in detail, yet clearly shows the essential equivalence of Justification, Forgiveness, Sonship, Reconciliation, awaking to new life, etc.; and without hesitation, makes "being declared righteous" interchangeable with "being made righteous". If these observations have in the first place the force of proof for the first-mentioned statement only, yet they are valid also for the second and the third.

But soon *objection* began to be taken to the use of these terms *as equivalent,* or to the propositions to the correctness of which this usage testifies. As early as the Formula of Concord the objection is put forward in regard to the first and the second points. The use of

Justification

Justification, Regeneration, making alive, interchangeably is characterized as inaccurate use of language. A distinction should be made between Justification or forgiveness of sin on the one hand, and Regeneration or Renewal on the other. Between the two things strictly regarded there exists the relation of succession in thought if not in time. It was not long until the latter also was asserted, or else the expressions became more vague. First came Justification, then by a second act of God communication of the Holy Spirit for Renewal. And then as was to be expected, in regard to the other point it was asserted that while Justification was pronounced in the heavenly Forum, the inward certainty of this judgment was to be distinguished from it. By some it was described as being in each instance the first important step in the new life wrought by the Holy Spirit; others thought of it as founded upon a special act of God in the believer, upon the mystical union. In any case the original Reformation conception that Justification, act of God though it be, is to be immediately exhibited in its subjective reality, fell into the background. Finally, as a result of these two changes, Justification came more and more as time went on to be regarded as a single act completed once for all, or as an act which was continually repeated (in "Absolution"), the relation of which to the whole development of Christian life then, no doubt, caused the greatest difficulties. There is an inseparable inner connexion between the two afore-mentioned questions. The newer "movement for greater sanctification" has thrown clear light on these imperfections in the definitions given by our early theologians. In Jellinghaus—"Perfect present salvation through Christ"—they appear in their totality in so crude a form that while the endeavour after psychological truth is spoken of, this is but a cloak for

unnatural psychology; and in the endeavour after full knowledge of the Bible, there is a manifest contradiction of the fundamental conceptions of the New Testament.

The *motive* of the changed answers given by our early theologians themselves to the questions mentioned is now clear. It was to preserve full comfort to poor troubled consciences, i.e. just to uphold the profoundest sense of the newly discovered Gospel of Justification. If justification means forgiveness of sins and new life, if the experience of justification be traced in the inmost consciousness, if its significance is to extend over the whole of Christian life, does it not then lose its certain and unassailable character, without which it is not what it professes to be, without which the whole struggle against the ancient church has no object? Nay, has not the distinction between the ROMAN and the Protestant doctrine of Justification been seen in these very points, and with good reason? The former, it is maintained, regards Justification as a process: the Decrees of Trent, for instance, speak of its beginning, continuance and completion; but the latter regards it as an act completed once and for all. The other distinctions are considered to be of even more importance. The Roman Church speaks of being made righteous, the Protestant of being declared righteous. And in accordance with this principle, the grace of God alone is by the latter made the foundation of all; while with the former, human action always comes likewise into consideration. There are points here that might easily be called in question, but we pass them by. If we look to the chief matter, these are very doubtful ways of defining the difference between Rome and us; so much so that we can actually understand to a great extent the Roman Catholic feeling of superiority, if we had no more accurate knowledge to offer. It is sufficient to recall the proof that was briefly

given above that the earliest documents of the Reformation by no means represent the difference in that way; but in all the respects mentioned, rather give answers which on these principles might be laid under suspicion of being too near the Roman standpoint. Now it would be rather strange if the pioneers in the decisive experience which made them what they were, should not have been themselves clear about it. Still this consideration would not exclude the possibility or even the duty of making their first expressions more exact. But in any case we cannot regard the alterations in expression above mentioned as improvements. If for no other reason, because it is psychologically impossible to carry out the implied separation of justification from new life, of Divine act from human consciousness, of conclusive assurance from that which it is always necessary to renew. But further, they are unsatisfactory from the religious point of view: they do not derive their colour from experience, but from painstaking reflection. If therefore the older ways of stating the matter are to be preferred, we must unflinchingly hold fast and follow out the fundamental thought which, even according to those who sought to improve upon them, they were meant to express; convinced that then any imperfections which may cling to the first mode of expression will of themselves entirely fall away, without, however, endangering as those attempts do, the jewel which has to be guarded, viz. the *Assurance of Salvation.*

It is therefore useless and only leads us astray from a proper understanding of the matter, to contrast our Confessions, statement for statement, with the Roman doctrinal decrees, especially with the conclusions of the Council of Trent, which, as is admitted, were drawn up in opposition to that understanding, not quite unrepre-

sented at that Council, of the jewel referred to, for which the Protestants fought, but fought unsuccessfully so soon as they entered upon the problem as their opponents set it. The question of assurance of salvation, the deepest craving of every religion—on the plane of our spiritual and ethical religion the one and only question—is felt by the Roman Church too in its own way, but not, for the reasons we have formerly given, in the depth in which it is felt by our Church. In the Sacrament of Penance it has its prescribed answer according to Catholic doctrine. "I absolve you," is spoken by the priest in the name of God, and it is expressly emphasised that he utters it as decree of judgment. But not only has the priest alone this right, and thus comes between the forgiving God and the sinner who requires to be justified. Not only is absolution by the priest dependent upon the fulfilment of minutely detailed acts of penitence and confession, and in regard to the temporary punishments in this life and in purgatory, upon the performance of works of reparation —in short all through, man somehow or other is still thrown back upon himself. To us, these two points alone seem to make assurance of salvation difficult, if not to deny it altogether. Still, the simple piety of our Catholic fellow-Christians will often enough overcome these hindrances. The deepest defect, the source, too, of all the other defects, has not yet been mentioned. It is this, that with every new deadly sin the state of grace is lost, and cannot be restored except by the Sacrament of Penance, and then only to be lost again if deadly sin be anew committed. And then what indefiniteness as to what is to be regarded as deadly sin, so much so that in the end one can only say—Deadly sin is that which can only be healed by the Sacrament of Penance! And in that what a call there is to grasp again and

again at this plank as a means of rescue! In other words, there is no real state of grace such as we can and must understand it to be, if it is to be of value to us; and therefore no assurance of salvation worthy of the name, i.e. a personal reliance upon the grace of a personal God. The statement of the Council of Trent indeed betrays a feeling of the loss of power which piety sustains by the lack of such an assurance. Therefore it admits that by special Divine privilege this is conferred upon individuals, referring evidently to the great Saints of the Church, who cannot be conceived of without some such self-sufficiency based only upon the assured grace of God. For the generality, however, the leading-string of the Church is safer, to which each one feels himself bound who only attains anew every now and again an assurance of salvation which is always again shaken, and is therefore no assurance at all. How much the very central point of our Christian religion is here at stake, is in a way attested by the jest commonly heard in many parts of our native land, that the Roman Catholics become Lutherans on their deathbed. The origin of it probably is the fact, not fully understood, that in the ancient prayers for the Mass, which acquire a special significance in these circumstances, God is with great emphasis described not as the "hoarder of merit," but as "one who freely dispenses grace". The turn given to this in popular speech unwittingly expresses the feeling that our religion in particular, if it were unable to give assurance of Salvation, would fail at the critical point. Nowhere else is there really such earnestness with regard to God's holy love as in Christianity.

Thus comparison with the Roman doctrine of assurance of salvation discovers the kernel of the PROTESTANT DOCTRINE of Justification. It is the answer to the

deepest question which arises, and from the nature of our religion must arise. Upon what rests my confidence that I may stand before God, that I am righteous before Him, i.e. pleasing, acceptable to Him, that I am admitted to communion with Him and kept eternally therein: how can I be certain of His love? Not through my own powers, merits, works, but by grace for Christ's sake through faith (Augs. Conf., Art. 4). The repeated negatives are intended to exclude not only every thought of "good works and merits" in the "vulgar sense," but also any such idea as that perhaps in the last resort faith in place of "good works" is the "good work" which God desires as being "in itself something meritorious"; in particular that merit may attach to penitence, the sorrow for sin and revulsion from it, inseparable from faith. "By grace for Christ's sake," is the clause on which the emphasis falls. The grace of God in Christ, Christ the image of God's fatherly love and the sacrifice for our sins, Christ or the promise of God's grace in Him, or the Gospel that declares Him, which induces faith, or trust—that is the basis of Justification. It is clear now why the word Justification appears so suitable. Because when the assurance of Salvation is in question, it rightly lays stress upon "being declared righteous" without in any way tending to exclude the "being made righteous"; because it thus represents the grace of God as a judgment of God which acquits the sinner, and assigns him sonship. It hardly now requires explanation why this judgment was classed as a *synthetic* one, the logical term being used in a way not quite free from objection, but with a clear enough meaning. Neither a "germ of new life," nor yet faith as a work well-pleasing to God, is the basis of this Divine judgment, in such wise that the latter, affirming what exists, would be an "analytic" judgment. That

what was represented as a "synthetic judgment" of God is "self-deception on His part," is for the original thought of the Reformers an entirely meaningless conception. Luther's recently discovered lectures on the Epistle to the Romans make it specially plain how far God's declaration that one is righteous, really amounts to making him righteous, to a "healing by the Good Samaritan": in God's eternal judgment, he who obtains mercy is the one who is really renewed and brought to the goal. In so far, the judgment affirming Justification might quite well also be described as analytic. But that makes no difference in the critical point which is described above. Or as Luther paradoxically expresses the two propositions: Faith, unless apart from all work, even the smallest, does not justify—nay, is no faith at all; Faith without works is dead,—nay, is no faith at all. This saying will, however, become clearer afterwards, when we come to speak expressly of faith.

Thus it is now evident why the word *Justification* cannot be allowed to drop out of Protestant doctrine—because it gives clearest expression to the most important aspect for us Protestants of Assurance of Salvation. This point of view under which the exposition of our faith must present the new relation towards God, which (*vide supra*) is certainly in principle a new mode of life at the same time, Regeneration, Conversion, Renewal, Saving Faith, or whatever the phrase may be, appears most prominently in the word Justification. It has been a battle-cry from the very first. Even Paul in the Epistles to the Corinthians, for instance, presented the Gospel almost without using the word Justification; and even in the Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians, it is the keynote only of those passages which are directly polemical. Thus from the very first something of paradox clings to it—as a word with

legal associations, used to designate the most intimately private experience, and from the nature of this experience more paradoxical still. Paul is well aware of this paradoxical quality, when he triumphantly asserts in the face of his opponents: "not by works, but by faith; boasting is excluded, by what law? by the law of faith". His Pharisaic antagonists had, so to say, everything on their side, morality and religion as well as reason, when they saw the ground of God's judgment of a sinner as righteous in a change of the sinner into a righteous person, i.e. into a person who fulfils God's law, the non-fulfilment of which drew upon him the judgment of being an unrighteous person. Paul knew how much offence he was causing by proclaiming a justification of the Godless man who, bare of all desert, in direct opposition to all desert, is accepted of God as one who trustfully allows himself to be bountifully dealt with as he trusts in the Crucified One, in that embodiment of offence for those who trust their own power; who yet, in this trust of his, does not appear righteous in God's judgment, but really is so—he and only he. Then Luther took up the old formula again, when the Gospel of assurance of salvation was once more in danger. Not as if the opponents held the same position in every detail; nor was his own understanding of Justification in all respects the same as that of Paul. Historical investigation has rightly pointed that out. As might be expected from his education and upbringing, Luther had without doubt a more constant, a more vivid and a more intense perception of the imperfection of the new life than Paul had. But in his own peculiar struggle for assurance of salvation, which arose out of that perception, he can find no better, no profounder phrase than that which Paul uses in that very passage where he confesses so confidently the greatness of his

new life (Phil. III.). From this point also we may reach an answer transcending the mere momentary strife, to the question at present so much discussed as to the relation of Paul's idea of Justification to the teaching of Jesus. The latest discussions have unquestionably brought out more clearly the difference between Paul's doctrine of Justification and Jesus' Gospel of forgiveness ; and this difference extends to all the relations of the great fact which is denoted by the word—to the sinner, God, Christ, the experience itself. But the more one has regard to what is essential, this difference is found in the last resort to be only the difference between one who inspires trust in God's grace, by inspiring trust in Himself as the bringer of this grace, and the believers who attain to trust in God's grace in Jesus through their trust in the latter. This has already been discussed under Christology, and in the doctrine of Scripture. But the certainty of salvation which Jesus gives by inspiring trust in the Father's forgiving love, is in its inmost content and value the same as what Paul glories in as Justification. It is not by accident that Paul in an important passage makes Justification equivalent to forgiveness of sins. Paul's Justification is just as little mere remission of punishment as Jesus' forgiveness of sins ; but is real pardon, removal of guilt, as being restoration of personal communion in spite of the guilt which has caused the separation. Only one must not, as some, who in other respects do not rigidly enough oppose the contrast between Jesus and Paul, have recently done, anew endanger this inner agreement between the two by seeking to deduce something additional of a substantial nature from the Pauline doctrine of Justification—by saying for instance that Justification is more than forgiveness, because God does not annul His Law but

affirms it; or that Justification is a judgment which at the same time is Grace, and he who is justified has passed the Last Judgment; or, as has even been said, that Justification cannot be described as an experience, for then we would have only subjective experience and no transcendent knowledge of God. In truth these verities, important as they are for Christian piety, are not connected with the word Justification—neither the objectivity of grace nor the holy earnestness of it. Else one would have strange thoughts regarding the Father's forgiveness as Jesus spoke of it. The woman who was a sinner must have had the Last Judgment behind her when she in faith grasped the meaning of Jesus' words. This, however, is true that the word Justification was coined in opposition to any limitation, explaining away, or confusing of assurance of salvation, in the struggle therefore particularly against such dangers as those indicated; and it has since maintained itself while the dangers in question have very much changed their form. And seeing that the struggle never ceases, but only assumes ever new forms, it is not an outworn, but a well-tried standard which promises continued victory.

Just at present indeed there is a lively discussion on this matter. The men of the present day, it is said, lack the necessary presupposition for the idea of Justification—unshaken belief in God. So far as this presupposition is present, however, it is alleged that the modern consciousness craves rather to be delivered from the power than from the guilt of sin, and regards the definite question to which the doctrine of Justification gives the answer as unhealthy self-torment. But with renewed emphasis the conviction is also expressed that it is not a "relic but the lost piece of silver" which is in question (K. Holl). For in the first place this mood of the modern mind ought to be justified. Those now

referred to maintain that when it is more narrowly examined, it cannot escape the reproach of being superficial. The "silent worship" of the Infinite, they hold, does not stand the test of the crises of personal life, and without such crises there is no religion worthy of the name, nothing higher than emotional æstheticism and morality that rests on relativism. In order to keep our footing in this puzzling world of reality, "to attain an optimistic view" of our own life, we must be clear as to how we stand to God, must be right with God. But having regard to our mortality, having regard still more to our moral worth, upon what do we base our confidence? When God as God becomes a reality to our consciousness, is it sufficient then to rely upon our ideal Ego, the Ego whose lower motives, united inseparably as they are with the loftier, we cannot conceal from ourselves unless we would deceive ourselves; the Ego whose inferiority we cannot separate from the experience of guiltiness, particularly when we have thoroughly broken off the habit of confessing our guilt in mere formal phrases? But then when religion becomes a thing of serious moment to us, we can see no escape but in the love of God, which is love only as being free and as freely pardoning; in short, just in the assurance which faith in Justification contemplated from the very first, and which in spite of all the changes time has brought, it has always given afresh in experience. But that this free love of God manifests itself in such pardon as forms new men, and that our confidence is not reposed for all that on the new life which is formed in us, but on the free pardon alone—on this no further explanation is required at present.

What still seems to be awanting in the foregoing exposition is easily supplied from what has been said. In particular, the correctness of our older Confessions

in regard to the three points mentioned previously, has been vindicated. Justification cannot be separated from Renewal: though the basis of it is not in the subject, yet it must manifest itself in the subject. It is not to be conceived of as an isolated act; rather its importance for the whole of Christian life is to be emphasized. From the relation which we have discussed between Justification and the assurance of Salvation, follows the correctness of the older statements; and this is specially plain with reference to the third. Faith in Justification has in this respect been aptly termed the regulator of Christian life (Ritschl). As a matter of fact, by it alone has it its steadfastness in the midst of change, its peace in the midst of struggle. To the last, one lives in dependence on free grace, not by looking to the new man; certain though it is that, if there is not this newness of life, one cannot live by free grace (cf. Luther's paradox above, p. 817). But the exposition of this as of the other points belongs to Ethics, though there Justification is not the leading idea. But seeing that in the foregoing, in order to bring out the most important sense of the doctrine of Justification we have always of course meant Justification "by faith alone," but have not yet expressly spoken of Faith, we must now proceed to do so. And in the first place the nature of justifying faith as it appears in the soul must be expounded, and then it must be shown how far Justification is experienced through it.

The *first* task is clearly akin to that undertaken at the very beginning, where we spoke of the place of religion in the life of the soul; and at bottom the answer here must be the same as there. The subject now under discussion is the very inmost centre of Christian religion in its psychological nature. Only the task is now rendered quite definite by its relation to

the definite Christian content of the process. Here comes in too what was set forth with regard to the knowledge which forms part of faith (pp. 240 ff.). Faith cannot, of course, be a process which takes place essentially in the intellect. Since Schleiermacher, anything of this sort is condemned as a misunderstanding of the real state of the case; and in the very Holy of Holies of Christian piety, where the question is in what spiritual process the Christian becomes certain of his salvation, of the forgiving love of God, it is absolutely impossible to think of such a thing. This was what our older theologians desired to guard against, when they described knowledge as only the first stage of faith, and conjoined inseparably with it the second element, assent to the saving truth which was known, but did not find the main thing even in that, but in a third element, namely trust, and in particular trust in God's grace, in the promise in Christ; i.e. the trust by which each individual appropriated to himself the universal proclamation. True, the psychology of these older writers which we have outgrown, easily leads us to a too coarse conception of their idea of faith. For instance, when they spoke of trust as a matter of will, they did not in any way intend thereby to exclude what we call feeling. Nor when they ascribed perception and assent to the intellect, did they mean to exclude in all respects the part performed by the will. Furthermore, they expressly took precautions that these two elements should not be understood, as has often been hastily done, to be a work of the subject which he by effort got himself to accomplish. For they laid stress upon the production of these spiritual processes by the Holy Spirit. But undoubtedly they neglected to make this working of the Spirit intelligible from the content of the Gospel. It was then an easy step to the notion that

one could by one's own effort acquire that perception and assent, and in the end trust also. Further, the conjunction of these three elements, and in particular the peculiar emphasis laid upon assent, and the distinction drawn between it and trust, as if there could be assent of any importance for religion without trust—this is not calculated to express the real course of the process with exactness, and above all does not clearly emphasize the most important point, that saving faith fundamentally belongs to the sphere of Will and Feeling. Thus in popular expositions of the Catechism there actually came to be such horrible definitions as the following: "To have faith means to learn the Confession of Faith, to accept it as true, and lay hold of it as the only ground of salvation".

To make the truth before us clear, however, it does not suffice here, any more than formerly when the psychical nature of religion in general was treated, to say that Faith is a matter of the whole personality; and even the pregnant Biblical phrase, "we believe with the heart," needs at least to be explained. The Reformers did this by declaring Faith to be "a lively, well-considered trust in God's grace" (Luther), an "emotion" (Calvin), "a willingness to receive the promise," and "a resting in the promise" (Melanchthon). Every real process of the religious life has its source in a feeling and ends also in a feeling. But this source and conclusion are only real in virtue of an affirmative act of will; for it is by no means a matter of experiencing in the sense of merely enduring, but of personal consent to experience the work and power of God upon us, a willing to receive God's bounty. For this crucial process in Feeling and Will, the necessary presupposition is the hearing and understanding of the message of Salvation, of the Promise of Christ's Gospel; for as-

suredly our religion, the perfect spiritual and ethical religion, does not consist of obscure and uncontrollable movements of feeling. Indeed, even that expression "presupposition" might still be misunderstood, without the additional statement made in express terms, that on the one hand the Gospel fully defines the act of feeling and will as respects its content, and on the other hand is itself appropriated on the ground of this act of will, as the chief possession that we know, as the truth which is absolutely valid. Consider the importance for faith ascribed to "preaching" throughout the whole New Testament, and with special emphasis in Romans x. 17. We must always remember too in this connexion that we cannot speak clearly of the psychological nature of faith, without keeping the object of faith continually before our minds. From the fact that we speak of faith in God's grace in Christ, all that we say regarding Feeling and Willing as well as of Knowing is more exactly defined. But although for the sake of clearness we have to direct our attention specially to the psychical process, what is said above remains true. Our feeling is stirred by the content and recognized value of the Word in which the Holy Spirit manifests His influence. This feeling, this appreciation of the value of what the Word contains, is affirmed by our will, which "lays hold of the promise," which "wills to receive," which turns itself "with desire" to the God of grace, "places itself upon His side," throws itself upon Him "with well-considered confidence," and in this trust "the heart is refreshed," becomes alive, "finds its rest," a rest which is in itself the stimulus to eternal activity, and that, too, an activity of the "new man," not only in willing but also in knowing. It is to be hoped that the latter remark will have the effect of putting an end to the contention that we make light of Christian thought,

or that we have actually taken to flight so as to get away from thought. But certainly we hold an exact psychological analysis of the act of faith to be no task which should be despised.

We thus come naturally to the second point which, as we stated, still required to be explained, namely that *through faith* Justification *is experienced.* We have already said that the original conception of the Reformers was that in Justification one actually experiences Salvation—all that Salvation implies—and moreover continuously experiences it in its character as assured (pp. 808 ff.). But all that is now clearer after the explanation of the idea of Faith. It is now evident that Justification is an Act of God, which is immediately experienced by the justified person; that forgiveness of sin and newness of life cannot be separated from each other; and that Justification is experienced wherever and however faith is present. When God's holy love in Christ produces trust, wins our trust, that is, of course, the utmost conceivable actuality in us of His love, of His forgiving grace. It is impossible to see how this should be actual in God, and only become actual in us by another special act. And equally unintelligent, because unintelligible, would be the question whether in such trust only forgiveness of sin and sonship to God really become ours, but not immediately the strength likewise to live a new life. To ask such a question, above all to answer it in the affirmative, would be to show that one had not understood what trust meant, even in the association of men of any moral standing, let alone trust in God's grace in Christ. Such trust is life and blessedness in all those aspects. Else the word trust and the words life and blessedness are not given the full and deep sense which they necessarily have. Finally, it is now evident that the idea of justi-

fication does not refer simply to the beginning of the new life, in the sense of a revulsion from the old to the new apprehended with especial vividness in consciousness; nor does it refer to any single point of time as such. To be exact, that is not in the first place of any importance. Such experiences there are doubtless, and they have doubtless their proper place in individual cases, but they are not universal (cf. Ethics, on Conversion). It was rather Justification by Faith which we named the regulator of Christian life. In whatever ways, and they are varied, it may appear in individual lives, it is and remains the fundamental answer to the question of Assurance of Salvation in the sense of the Protestant Church. Now, however, when we have learned the nature of justifying faith, this significance of the doctrine of Justification is still clearer. Faith itself is an experience of, a participation in, the grace of God. It is impossible to conceive any real moment of faith which is not such an experience and participation. It does not only include the assurance of salvation: it is such assurance. The manner and degree of this experience are naturally infinitely varied; not only for reasons which lie in the human subject, in the capacity for experiencing God's working and in the faithfulness to the grace received, but also by reason of the sovereign freedom of Divine grace, of the Spirit Who giveth to every one as He will.

But now it is of the greatest importance once more to emphasize that *the Assurance of Salvation does not rest upon this subjective experience and participation, but upon faith purely* in its relation to the ground of trust, to God's grace in Christ (pp. 815 ff.). So at the last shines out once more the decisive import of the doctrine of Justification by faith, the confirming of our assurance of salvation, and now after all this detailed characteri-

zation, shines out in its supreme importance. It is really the Article by which the Church stands or falls—which we cannot give up, discard what transitory beliefs we may (Schm. Art.). Thus understood, this article coalesces with that other which fell to be dealt with above only in the amplifications under the burden of which it appears in history, but of which the original and valuable sense is just that of assurance of salvation —the idea of *Election*. Assurance of salvation on the basis of Justification by faith is consciousness of eternal election. Independent of all the changes which time may bring, the Justified know their salvation to be hid in God's eternal love. By connecting it, however, with the faith in Justification, we further guard most surely against all abuse of this belief in election and all deviation into impious speculation.

This becomes quite clear from an aspect of the doctrine of Justification which we have purposely left undiscussed until now; namely that Faith, properly understood, must also be set down as the *condition* of Justification. So far we have only considered faith as its subjective actuality. And that is the most important aspect. But this truth would be left incomplete, if we did not add that it is on condition of faith that we are justified. As is well known, the New Testament associates the two things; most pointedly in those passages where faith is exalted as God's work in us, and we are summoned to have faith. These New Testament expressions, however, show us also the proper way to the solution of the apparent contradiction. They are not to be understood as the basis of a theory which balances and measures the Divine and the human share of the operation one against the other; in short, not as supporting any theory such as we met in the doctrine of grace and freedom in general, and in

the doctrine of predestination in particular (pp. 782 ff.). Here our decision must be as it was there, and in pronouncing it we cannot go farther than what was there stated. The pure ethical character of our religion demands that the responsibility lies with us whether we allow God to work faith in us or not; and our religion as religion demands that we confess our faith to be the result of God's working in love. All that, however, is to be understood as it was expounded in the Christian doctrine of God and of man, of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit of God and Christ. Furthermore, our statement with regard to the one ultimate mystery, in which the doctrine of grace and freedom terminated, has to be repeated here.

Finally, on the basis of what has been said, a question which was much discussed during the past decades, whether Justification is the Justification of *the community* or of the individual, can be easily settled. We are not bound down to a direct alternative. As grounded in the historical fact of God's Revelation of love which culminates in the Cross of Christ, Justification belongs as a matter of course to the community of believers which is called together by this act of God. In so far, however, as it is Justification by faith, it is actualized through the faith of individuals and for them, in the Church and through the Church which is the instrument of the Divine working—in the sense which was laid down in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and of the Church with its means of grace.

The Christian Hope (Eschatology)

Christian faith is in its very nature Christian Hope. We had to keep that prominently before our minds from the first general definition of our religion, through

every separate section, down to the definition of the idea of faith. And this significance attaching to "Eschatology" must now be kept specially in view, because it indicates the way in which it should be treated.

It has rightly been pointed out, just as in regard to the doctrine of Predestination, that the doctrine of "the Last Things" may have a much more comprehensive sense than that here indicated (E. Troeltsch). The phrase "Last Things," taken from Ecclesiasticus VII. 40, places the reference to time in the foreground, and thereby implies at the very outset that the truth in question does not yet lie completely within the sphere of our knowledge and experience. In itself the phrase indicates generally the contrast to all that is merely relative; and this is not to be escaped by ascribing reality to some favourite ideas of nature and history. The result will then be that in the strict sense, only belief in a Theism which includes Personality has any conception of "Last Things"; while Pantheism of all sorts is limited to a definite mode of contemplation, and does not lead to any "ultimate". Under the former belief, however, the particular problems arise which are usually treated of in Dogmatics under the heading Last Things; although the reference of eternity to time may often, in uncritical fashion, have too much stress laid upon it, and in consequence the whole treatment of the matter may take too much the form of a myth. But on the other hand, this danger must not mislead us into eliminating, or at all events essentially curtailing, Eschatology—in the old, strict sense of the hope which transcends the conditions of earthly existence—by all the more thorough consideration of the future development on earth, which has to be treated mainly by Ethics; a matter which we shall again have to refer to later.

Eschatology

It is an acute observation (Biedermann) that one should begin the reading of any book on Dogmatics at the end; in its *Eschatology the innermost character of the system* comes out most clearly. As a matter of fact it does cast a clear light upon every single section of doctrine. Is the universality of God's saving plan, is personal communion with a personal God asserted without reserve, is the permanent significance of the Redeemer upheld, is forgiveness of sin conceived of as one with victory over the power of sin—on these points the Eschatology must remove all doubt, even when indefinite statements which may have been made in the preceding parts could not be at once recognized as such. Nor is it difficult to discover the reason of this. In the doctrine of the last things, the communion between God and man is set forth as completed, and therefore the idea of our religion, the Christian principle, is presented in its purity; not, however, as a mere idea in the sense of an ideal which is never completely realized, but as perfect reality—and it is clear what difficulties are implied by that. It must therefore appear at last, in the presentment of Eschatology if not sooner, whether the reality of this communion with God has received its unrestricted due. What is thus true in the first place of the *content* of the Christian hope, is naturally true also of the *manner*, the *norm* and *basis* of its utterances. It is true of the manner in which eschatological propositions are expressed. The symbolical mode of expression used for the spiritual realities to which the Christian's hope clings, annuls neither the definiteness nor the certainty of its inmost content; but it has often endangered them, when care was not exercised in laying down all the preceding parts of the doctrine to provide against it. The foregoing assertion is equally true of the norm of Eschato-

logy. If there is any indefiniteness as to the rule which ought to govern the formation of dogmatic propositions, the error makes itself most acutely felt at length in Eschatology. Finally it is brought clearly to light in Eschatology whether the foundation is firmly established. It has been continually borne in upon us that the position we take up with regard to the norm of dogma, depends on that adopted as to the ground of its certainty. In short, in every respect this last chapter of Dogmatics reflects the essential nature of the whole system, both in form and content.

While thus the scientific importance of the Eschatology is in inverse relation to the carelessness with which it is often treated—as an unimportant appendix—the subject-matter moves us to say at least a word further concerning its *practical importance.* The sincerity with which our older theologians discussed the necessity, utility and dignity of this part of dogma, finds an echo in the heart of every unsophisticated person. The thought of death is never trivial, however much mocking raillery or gloomy seriousness may intentionally or unintentionally incite us to regard it as such. For "to our immediate feeling, nothing seems so much a matter of course as the fact of our own life. On the other hand, that this matter-of-course should cease to exist arouses ever anew our astonishment" (Rohde). Hence the thought of death not only casts its weird shadow upon advancing life, but stimulates also the hopeful, aspiring outlook of youth, before which the day lies all golden and bright. In its longing to possess all things, it does indeed look askance at the so-called belief in another world, which seems to be but an insurance institution against all accidents, with the motto—"Eternity alone provided for"; but nevertheless with kindling eye gazes upon the "pinnacles of the eternal

city". Conscious Christian faith, however, cannot but hope for the consummation ; what it has urges it on to this issue, wakes a feeling of want. It finds in experience both that poverty is the mother of riches, and that riches is the mother of poverty. It felt the one when in its nothingness it cast itself upon God's bounty: through the unspeakable bounty which it has received, it has become conscious of new needs. Its possession brings with it a sense of things not yet possessed ; the greater and more certain the one, the greater and more certain also the other.

The importance of Eschatology, however, is also shown in another way. It is a very much *disputed subject*, and that not by any means only in circles where scientific or practical materialism holds sway, but just in those in which the ideal tendencies of the modern consciousness prevail. "For the religious consciousness of the present, the hope of immortality falls ever more into the background and becomes secondary, so that one has no difficulty in prognosticating for this dogma an easy and natural death." Among the reasons for this aversion we find it stated with especial frequency, that "a condition of absolutely undisturbed blessedness could by a feeling and thinking being scarce be endured for a week, let alone for all eternity". Clearly that is an attempt at pacification rather than a proof. One proof, however, is held to be the insoluble unity, itself beyond all need of proof, of that which was formerly distinguished as body and soul. But in unexpressed respect for the life-hunger of the natural feeling, the exponents of this view hasten on, almost against their will, to give the assurance spoken of, that eternal life is not a blessing worth striving for ; and generally add, reviving some well-known and hoary phrases, that it is better not to be than to live the happiest life : it is not

annihilation which is painful, but the thought of it. With death, it is alleged, we have nothing to do, for "where we are death is not, and where death is we are not". That, it is said, exercises even now a powerful influence on modern feeling. Nine-tenths of the human race die peacefully, and especially the increase of suicide shows that "people" no longer believe in a Judge. By more noble natures, however, this limitation to the short span of life on the earth is put forward as an incitement to cast over it the sheen of inward infinity. To be merged in the eternal, after time has really been made use of, is supposed to be a thought which ministers abundant peace, and with double effect when "faith in the future of society" animates the courageous warrior.

Let us guard against passing judgment too hastily on this condition of men's minds at present, one which is certainly strangely confused. Let us repress, too, at this stage the question, what power such thoughts really have, and whether in particular this faith in the future of society is safe from the danger of revulsion to pessimistic resignation, and let us linger still for a little over the attitude of the *Christian Church* at present to the Christian hope. To trace out and admit the presence of a secularistic sentiment even in it is a sad task, but one which must for truth's sake be undertaken. "We walk over the graves differently from those who were before us"; "we live in the present more than in the future." Conscientious observers even of religious circles of the narrower type believe they detect a great change in the times in this particular matter, even when they go no farther back than to compare, say, the older Pietism of the thirties of last century with particular forms of the present day. They lament that individuals have not any longer a simple readiness for death and joyfulness in meeting it, and

that as a body they are no longer so absorbed in the thought of the consummation of the Kingdom of God. And these very observers have the feeling that the tendency which is found in conjunction with this, to lay excited and unbalanced emphasis on certain cherished notions as to Eschatology, is often only the reverse side of this weakening of lively, heartfelt Christian hope. It is not every struggle for the maintenance of hope, not every protestation of belief in the second coming of Christ, which bears the stamp of luminous and glowing truth. In this connexion a notable saying of Luther may become intelligible: "No person whatever, unless one who is filled with the Holy Spirit, secretly knows, believes in, desires eternal life, although he speaks of it and gives Scripture for it, chapter and verse. O that you and I alike were free from the leaven referred to, so rarely is there a believing heart as concerns this article."

This being so, and Eschatology being so important in principle and in practice, at all times and at the present day, in the general consciousness as well as in the Christian Church, theology cannot shirk the task of treating this portion of Dogmatics with strictness of method, however shortly. Certain portions may appear to be tedious in their details; but they have the purpose of making this section unmistakably clear, and thus, for reasons already given, doing the same thing for the whole body of doctrine. In other words, it is necessary to apply to this particular portion of doctrine, as the matter may require, the principles governing the exposition of the system in general; and the application of them will become most evident by taking a critical view of the various fundamental conceptions of the nature of Christian hope as to the future, which have appeared in history, and of the arguments adduced and

the methods of treatment corresponding to them. This process of laying the

Foundation of the Doctrine by a Critical Review

we will guard against the danger of prolixity, which would be unjustifiable at this point, by stating the result of it in anticipation, and in the first instance quite generally and briefly. It corresponds precisely to the thought as to the significance of this dogma mentioned at the outset. Eschatology is an essential part of *religion;* i.e. in the first place, Eschatology has the roots of *its power* in the religion. At least this is true of the earnest, powerful faith in a future beyond this world. "Religion has made it strong" (Rohde), from whatever other sources it may have sprung; a truth which is only confirmed by the result of ethnological investigations to the effect that the belief in souls and apparitions is to a great extent not of a religious origin and character. There is, no doubt, one strong religion without any vigorous hope of a life after death, that of Israel. But this puzzling circumstance is explained by the fact that it finds its strength in the belief in an earthly future to which there is no parallel; and in this belief that God would manifest His power in the future of this actual world, it created the conditions under which a future hope which presupposes new conditions of existence, could really be entertained. But our initial proposition that Eschatology is an essential part of religion, means not only that it draws its strength from religion. Not only the energy of hope, but *the nature of it depends upon the religion* to which it belongs. That is shown by the ideas which the Greeks had of a realm of shades, those of the Indians as to the happy hunting grounds, those of the Valhalla of the Germans, the Mohammedan Paradise, the Christian Heaven, which

is itself conceived of in so many different ways in Christian Confessions and communities. In short, as the religion is so is the Eschatology. This insight into the religious nature of Eschatology opens up the right way to its proper exposition, as also to its methodical demonstration. It can then, as a matter of course, be laid down in detail only according to the norm valid for the particular religion in question, and be proved true only by the method of demonstration valid for that religion.

But for this purpose it is first necessary that we take a glance at the History of Christian Eschatology, in order that we may concretely demonstrate the truth of the conclusion already stated. In the *Ancient Church* it is usual to distinguish the chiliastic period with its formula—"May grace come, and the world turn to nothingness," and the time during which, on account of the Church entering more into the life of the world, the Christian hope became spiritualized. We need not go into details, however interesting they may be. We may pass over the parallel which easily suggests itself, to the mood of the newly converted: the glow of enthusiasm fills such an one, but the danger of impatience also threatens; satisfaction with higher realities causes the tendency to confuse the earthly and the heavenly. Equally clear is the truth as well as the limitation of the "spiritualizing tendency" which was cultivated in Alexandria especially, and of the violent reaction in Montanism. That, too, is Christian hope, no doubt; but again we ask, is it the whole, pure, unrestricted Christian hope? So also in the *Middle Ages.* The other world lies close on the boundary of the present world; the Church of the earthly Kingdom of God reaches over into the Heavenly. With what seriousness is the idea of the Judgment regarded; yet how it is played with!

In Eschatology as well as in other things, the *Reformation* was a return to the beginnings, under new conditions and in a new way. Compare Luther's prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus," his longing for the "dear Judgment day," with Gregory VII's "Dictatus," or Protestant hymns like "Wake, awake! for night is flying," with the hymns of the Middle Ages. And consider what strength and stimulus such a life of hope furnished for the life of the present, in spite of the many unsolved contradictions which it presented. What Orthodoxy then brought into system was, in this department also, faithful adherence to, but limitation of, the prophecies of Luther which were so full of promise. The profound earnestness of the petition for "a brief, blessed hour" for the individual, which the best hymn writers repeated in almost every closing verse, was far from corresponding to the breadth of Luther's view over the whole of the Kingdom, whether in this world or the next; e.g., as we can easily enough understand in the Thirty Years War, the "Vale of tears" could become a mere phrase, and the comfort of Justification could become a cloak for moral laxity, as particular epitaphs actually testify. Grander was Spener's "Hope of better times"; but soon it took the form of petty calculation regarding the Millennium. Johann Jakob Moser's recognition that the Kingdom in its perfection must still be a Kingdom of love, could only in great souls overcome the old revived doctrine of Scholasticism, that its content consisted essentially of the vision of God, or the Chiliastic ideas of outward kingship. The Rationalistic movement again completely resolved the definite hope of Christianity into the idea of never-ceasing progress. In contrast to this, the Speculative movement, with its denial of that poverty-stricken idea of immortality, and its transplantation of it into the life

upon the earth, was able to give the impression of being an enriching of the idea. In the present, amid widespread Naturalism, as already indicated, we hear the longing utterances of Sentimentalism, the deeper notes of recent Mysticism, expressions of hope for the continued existence of the matured personality, based on Leibnitz and Lessing, Kant and Goethe. At the same time there are not wanting quite different pronouncements which, without adopting a firm conviction, assume a sceptical attitude themselves as towards scepticism. With not a few, the personal position of a Lessing and Goethe may have influence, especially the knowledge which gains increasing clearness, of the importance for the former of the idea of Metempsychosis, and of the great extent to which it limits the currency of that saying of his, one that was long repeated with so much relish, with regard to the "wearisomeness" of eternal life. In fact the identification of religion and the hope of an eternal life has lately been maintained, and this is the more noticeable when it is affirmed at the same time —"There is no connexion between time and eternity; even Jesus is no longer listened to on that matter" (Schrempf). At the same time, apart from Rome, which finds even in the new conception of the world room for her topography of Heaven and Hell, the sects are most prominent with their fantastic eschatology; while theologians within the Churches have indeed often claimed to perfect the not yet finally completed doctrine of Eschatology, but have achieved in actual life no success whatever with their doctrine. Side by side with all this, however, and very largely independent of it, the Christian hope acts as a strong and steady light; that is, for all those who personally make the Gospel their own.

And the RESULT OF THIS HISTORICAL REVIEW is this. Christian Eschatology has in the history of the Church

assumed many forms, corresponding on the whole to the general conception of the Gospel prevailing at the time; but in none of these forms are we able to find the exact and complete expression of the hope of Christianity. *Only the norm of faith which we have in Revelation can determine what Christian hope is.* The history of Eschatology, however, shows again with quite special clearness the stages through which dogma in general passes with such regularity, that one may call it a historical law. The Gospel becomes conjoined with foreign, though at the time valuable, material; this amalgam is developed into all its details, and is then dissolved again by the inner incompatibility of its various elements, and a reconstruction takes place as the Gospel is apprehended afresh by the means of a new world of culture (cf. pp. 408 ff.). In the sphere we are now concerned with, too, we meet on the one hand with the strongest emphasis upon, and the most detailed description of, the conceptions of future things; and on the other hand with the most extreme uncertainty as to what the future may contain, and the greatest hesitation, scepticism, or negation as to the fact that there is any future life at all. But these are quarrelling brothers, who belong together and with inner necessity alternately abdicate the throne in one another's favour. We can only give examples here. *Confident omniscience* with regard to the Last Things is just as much characteristic of Orthodoxy as it is of Enthusiasm. Scholasticism plotted out a map of heaven giving the five places of abode of departed spirits. As to the resurrection-body of children, our early Protestant dogmatists make bold to judge as if the matter in question were one of earthly experience; and it is useful to call to mind a book like that of Schottelius, "Die Hölle," Wolfenbüttel, 1776, because otherwise one might easily regard the

actual fact as impossible. It closes with the words: "Whoever does not accept this is a confoundedly stupid person". But rash speculations, e.g. as regards the intermediate state, are still regarded by many amongst us as a special proof of Faith. This tendency prevails doubtless much more in the fanatical sects, among whom the biggest jumble passes often for the most profound thought; and the more improbable a thing is, the more pious to believe it. For instance, according to the teaching of the "Sabbatists" or "Seventh Day Adventists," the Lord will return when the hundred and forty and four thousand are sealed who have not allowed themselves to be stamped with the stamp of the beast; i.e. have not joined in the heathen festival, the celebration of Sunday. Circles who are thus inclined are in the habit of coolly recognizing such a wild flight in others for what it is, only however to start out themselves on one equally rash. To be just, and honourably to set before ourselves the dangers of the subject, we must not avoid mentioning that even great and otherwise particularly sober-minded men have at least in some point succumbed to these dangers. In the face of Mark XIII. 32, we cannot describe J. A. Bengel's calculation of the year 1836 as the year of the Second Coming, as anything but a case in point.

In short, the norm of belief given by Revelation is disregarded by an Eschatology which, whether in the solemn dress of orthodoxy or the phantastic garb of fanaticism, claims to know all possible details, and all with equal certainty. The same judgment, however, must be passed upon all dilution and *negation* of it. Under this general term, it is true, we must, for the sake of brevity, group together very different types of opinion, but from the point of view already mentioned they really are connected. The Rationalistic movement

regarded all the concrete parts of the Christian hope as a temporary dress, woven most frequently with conscious accommodation, the return of Christ as well as our resurrection. There remained God, Freedom, and Immortality, these three; "but the greatest of these was Immortality" (Strauss). As to it, very many were honourably in earnest, and we often unreasonably underestimate the power of such a conviction; forgetful of what the generations who were brought up in such a limited but by many really accepted Eschatology, accomplished in difficult times. True, this Ego, so left to itself, with the prospect of its continued development through endless time, was poverty-stricken; and we can understand how, to many, a feeling of relief came with Schleiermacher's declaration: "In the midst of the finite to become united with the Infinite, and to be eternal in every instant,—that is the immortality which religion knows". Strauss rightly says that that is in truth all that the modern consciousness can say regarding Immortality. We may add that it is not by chance that this consciousness loves to appeal just to Schleiermacher's utterances. For they lay bare in brilliant fashion the weak points of the Christian hope which is not understood in its proper depth. "The secret selfishness, the hidden, earthly sentiment, the manner in which the majority of men picture immortality to themselves, and their longing after that, seem to me irreligious; nay, their wish to be immortal has no foundation but their aversion to the real goal of religion. They have no wish to escape from the familiar limitations, and at best long for wider eyes and better limbs. But God speaks to them in the words of Scripture: He who loses his life for My sake shall find it. They might at least try to give up their life for the love of God, to sink their own personality even here

and to live in the One and the Whole." Schleiermacher himself confessed that disgust at the self-deception resulting from a mean habit of thought makes itself rather strongly heard in these words; but they have been again and again quoted as casting a welcome halo over the denial of individual, personal immortality. That it was really denied, and not left an open question as by Schleiermacher, was unambiguously clear in the Hegelian school. But even after all doubt of that has been removed, the history of that movement, so near in time, yet now so strange to us, commands our interest: the silence of the master, the promises of optimistic disciples more well-intentioned than clear, the unflinching prosecution of the principle by Strauss and Feuerbach, or among Dogmatic theologians by Biedermann. Side by side with this earnest denial, in which one could often feel the quivering pain of renunciation, frivolity likewise made its appearance. "The last day is that in which one feels young and troubles oneself no more about death and eternity" (Edelmann). Both these tendencies prevail also in the present, from an examination of which we started. Only the negative tendency no longer appears in the guise of Speculation but of Materialism, and is the more loudly canvassed among great masses of the people, the more silent strictly scientific circles have become regarding it. It would be a mistake, however, were one therefore to speak of an ascending line of thought in Eschatology. There is more of reserve nowadays, but it is in essentials the reserve of scepticism. "Among the graves we have nothing to look for." No doubt there mixes in this scepticism often—and oftener perhaps than appears to outsiders—the deep and powerful tones of Hamlet's saying:—

> To die—to sleep—
> To sleep! perchance to dream!—ay, there's the rub.
> For in that sleep of death what dreams may come. . . .

But a power in the life of the present, belief in the eternal life is not, except in so far as the Christian faith in general shows itself as a living force.

We thus return to the main thought which we set out to explain. Eschatology has its home in religion; from it comes its power to influence, by it the form which it takes is determined. The Christian expectation as to the future draws its power and its form from the Christian religion. Much has been promulgated under its name which is not derived from it. Though that has passed away in doubt and denial, the fate of the Eschatology which really belongs to the Christian religion is not at all thereby decided. In other words, in Eschatology we are thrown back with very special force upon the principle which is valid throughout the whole of theology, —that every dogma should be formulated strictly in accordance with its *highest norm.* This norm was recognized and proved to be that apprehension of Revelation which faith attains. Before we proceed to apply it to the doctrine under discussion, let us call to mind that this determination of the norm is essentially dependent upon the *demonstration of the truth* of our religion. And this also, as applied expressly to Eschatology, requires to be upheld as valid for it. For even the best that could be said on the matter of formulating our Eschatology strictly according to the norm of Revelation, would be worthless, if the least shadow of doubt remained with us as to whether the DEMONSTRATION OF THE TRUTH of Christianity extended so far as to include this doctrine.

At the very first the *negative* part of our Apolo-

getics (pp. 146 ff.) is, as applied to Eschatology, of special interest. In place of the speculative proofs of the Existence of God, we have here the *arguments for the Immortality* of the Soul; and they clearly correspond to each other. And their fate is the same. Again the right of so extending the use of reason beyond the province of experience would first have to be justified. Should that succeed, still the argument from the nature of the Soul, from its consciousness, or from its "unity" or "substantiality," would be far from conclusive. Even the philosopher who regards the Cosmological argument for the existence of God with, comparatively speaking, so friendly eye, says of this: "We have here made use of a word, but we cannot get rid of the facts of sleep, of exhaustion, of aberrations. Could not even souls be thought of as actions of the One Self-existent Being, characterized by the faculty of being centres of feeling? Why should not their life be like a melody broken by pauses, while the eternal source continues, from which, as one of its acts, their being and activity sprang? Out of it would they spring in direct connexion with their former existence" (Lotze). The conclusion must in the end be the fatal one: eternal existence follows from the designation, "substantiality" of the soul, the more certainly, the more definitely it has first been arbitrarily included in the idea. Many regard rather more favourably the argument for the Immortality of the soul which corresponds to the Teleological theistic argument, that which deduces from the richness of its earthly development, the continuation of its development; somewhat after the manner of Goethe who, at the period when he was coming to the ripeness of his powers, characterized as unreasonable the thought that so many germs of mental life should fail to come to maturity. In any case this

argument would only apply to the highly endowed. But a conclusive argument it certainly is not, however strongly rooted in our sympathies it may be. And that is ultimately true also of the so-called Moral argument. Among its many forms ought to be regarded as the most convincing, not that which maintains that virtue must be rewarded by a corresponding measure of happiness, but that which points to the unreasonableness of moral aspiration which never entirely reaches its goal; which asserts that good must come to actuality, and that through the good will the obstacles must be overcome. But apart from the fact that there our reflection meets with new difficulties from the impossibility of conceiving a finite moral will without possible opposition, the acknowledgment of an absolute moral law, which is a presupposition of this "proof," is not a matter of conclusive proof but of personal decision. The theoretical reason borrows from the practical; and how far the practical extends is itself matter of dispute. Not to speak of the fact that the morally aspiring individual knows quite other conditions than one who so lightheartedly makes these demands, knows the anxious question whether he be not meet for destruction.

It is true that in the opinion of many of our contemporaries, there is a much better proof of Immortality than any of these fragmentary speculative arguments, one which we could not reasonably treat of in the Doctrine of God, *an exact proof from experience.* How Hypnotism can be used for this purpose is, it must be admitted, only conceivable to those already convinced; for it teaches absolutely nothing regarding other conditions of existence than those of the present. Somnambulism and modern Spiritualism again are far from being exact science for our present purpose, so

long as the complaisant forgetfulness of a sensation-loving public very readily permits continually recurring trickeries to be inserted again and again amongst the collection of facts, by periodicals skilfully conducted, and surrounded often in their very title with the glamour of mystery. Besides, the poverty of such manifestations of spirit warns us not to estimate them too highly, even if they should be confirmed. For the Christian standpoint, Luke xvi. 31 is a sufficient and unmistakable answer. At the best, then, we have one more illustration of the poet's saying—"There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy". Even for that one would prefer better reasons.

However, though there is no conclusive proof, whether speculative or empirical, neither are we threatened in these quarters with *any disproof*. This reverse side of our want of proof is a real gain for Eschatology, and deserves to be insisted upon (cf. pp. 156 ff.). A clever saying runs—"Nothing new has been said *in favour* of it since Plato, nor *against* it since Epicurus". With more exactness, according to what precedes, we may say that with our insight into the impossibility of proving it, that into the impossibility of disproving it has grown,—at least for really serious epistemology, which does not treat the investigations of the limits to our knowledge that lie in the mind itself as if they had never been. For no doubt the observation of the close, even indissoluble, connexion between the physical and mental processes in our present experience, has undeniably increased in cogency for the production of an immediate impression. And that gains ever fresh additions to the number of those who doubt as to another life. Especially the theory of psycho-physical parallelism has doubtless an influence

in this direction, when, as so often happens, it is put forward as an ultimate metaphysical truth. In connexion with this, the same applies to half thought-out conclusions from the law of Conservation of Energy. In these matters we shall get along properly only when the real Critical Philosophy, which pushes its way, though slowly, in the higher ranges of thought, communicates itself to the lower regions so as to attune the mental life of men in these also.

While it was worth while to apply the negative side of our Apologetics at least briefly to the particular doctrine now under discussion, in regard to the *positive* constructive aspect a mere recapitulation will in the main suffice. Once the uneasy suspicion is set aside that there is some conclusive argument against faith in a completion of human life under new conditions of existence, one is prepared thankfully to consider what evidence the value-judgments of the willing and feeling spirit bring for the support of this conviction ; and also willingly to consider the limits of a demonstration of the kind, one by which the heart is made ready to receive the Gospel that proclaims the fact of God's existence, and to accept the investigations which elucidate and confirm it (pp. 163 ff.). Here the application to a province so peculiar as that of Hope for the Future, will make especially clear that the measure of power to convince which was there ascribed to Revelation, is just that which the matter itself requires and which history furnishes. The certainty of the Christian hope cannot be founded upon the outward authority of the Church in the Roman sense, or of Scripture in the early Protestant sense. But even Schleiermacher's principle of religious experience is a precarious foundation, as his whole exposition of these prophetic doctrines shows. Prophetic they no doubt

are, and therefore there are clear limits to the definiteness of the ideas; a truth that will later receive our special attention. But they are not on that account indefinite in the sense of uncertain; they rather form an integral part of saving faith. Just because they are shown to be such—and this is the aim of all we have to say further—they take their place in the total argument for our Christian faith. We would only single out for mention how important for Eschatology is the position taken up in that total argument with regard to the Resurrection of Jesus; and how we do not here require in any degree to go beyond what was there admitted (pp. 210 f.).

If this excursus on the basis of Christian hope be admitted to be correct, then there follows logically from it as before what is necessary as to its NORM. It is Holy Scripture in the sense previously defined (pp. 277 ff.). But a number of the principles laid down with regard to its use have a specially clear light cast upon them in their bearing on Eschatology. In particular the main thought itself. A dogmatic proposition is not in accordance with Scripture because it accords with a single text or the greatest possible number of separate texts; but because it is in accord with the essential meaning of the faith-inspiring, faith-accepted Divine Revelation, a meaning ever more clearly apprehended in the course of her history by the Christian Church, on the basis of Scripture. This idea must be allowed special weight in Eschatology. It is from this inmost meaning that we have to deduce our answers to questions which, in New Testament times, had not yet come into the field of view, but are now pressing questions for us; as, for instance, that as to the fate of those who died before Christ came. The recognition of this principle is indeed a test of the proper use of

Scripture in dealing with our present subject. But while in Christian Ethics it is almost universally recognized, or at all events tacitly adopted, in regard to this last section of Dogmatics the opposite opinion prevails widely, just among those who have a lively interest in the subject. On account of the difficulty and obscurity of the topics which have here to be treated of, in so far as they completely transcend the bounds of earthly experience, even that of the pious, it is a religious duty, it is said, to place oneself the more unreservedly under the guidance of the letter of Holy Scripture, and in particular of the prophetical Books. Such a cast of thought may be a sore trial of patience for serious theology; yet it shows, when combined with personal piety, that it is not irresponsive to the evidence that at all events the strongest testimonies to our hope, are, even in the New Testament, immediately associated with the most vivid experiences of believers; as in Romans VIII. 31 ff. Further, it is often easy to convince them of the danger to faith which lies in putting too great stress upon the extraordinary and peculiar—the very danger which they would fain escape by holding strictly to the text of Scripture; namely that our future hope itself becomes precarious, because those separate passages to which they give preference cannot without violence be fused together into a complete and convincing whole, and that in any case all these carefully guarded and cherished beliefs together become "prophetic" in the sense so little approved of uncertain images, phantastic wishes. For the very formula which they pin their faith to, "It is written," has not in this province the same force as in the field of actual believing experience, where even a saying, in itself strange and sterile, may produce living fruit. Then this insecurity of an apparently exceptionally strong faith betrays itself often

in irritability, and the tendency to pass judgment upon those who hold different opinions.

But the stress which we have laid upon this leading thought was never meant by us as an easy way of escaping from a *strictly methodical use of Scripture* in detail; on the contrary, it arose out of such use, and demands it at every point. If then we turn our attention in this place as elsewhere to its particular rules, we find that for Eschatology special importance attaches to the proposition as to the difference between what is new and peculiar, belonging directly to the Revelation, and what is merely popular and part of the common belief of the time. Only from the nature of the subject it is quite to be expected that here the points of contact which are indicated will be specially numerous. Attention will therefore gladly be given to such information as may disclose connexions of the kind to us, and may extend them beyond our formerly narrow horizon so as to include Babylonia and Persia; and in particular may throw light upon any influences from these quarters which affected the post-canonical Jewish Eschatology that was at the height of its efficacy in the time of Jesus. The caution which the subject demands, the progress of knowledge in this sphere will itself bring with it. Attention will then be turned again, and with more exactness, to the independent elements, first in the Jewish, finally in the Christian hope as to the future; and one will be able with more certainty to determine what ideas are, as essentially necessary formations, common to circles which otherwise are far apart; and in especial will be able more accurately to guage the power of transforming traditional materials. If anywhere, the rule holds good here, that when two different persons say the same thing, it is not the same. Precisely in "prophecy," such as is peculiar to Eschatology, the ex-

pression is frequently not changed until long after the old words have acquired an entirely new sense. And one thing especially must not be forgotten, that besides fully developed lines of thought as to Christian Eschatology, whose historical connexions can be clearly discerned, there exist pronouncements that were originally Christian, perhaps quite unpretentious and short, which for ever give classical expression to the true meaning of the new hope. Now it is out of these in the first place that Christian Eschatology is built up; while from those other lengthy passages in which there is so much alloy of old and foreign elements, only after all possible processes of sifting can a contribution to it be deduced.

We are thus led also to test the value for Eschatology of the particular rules formerly laid down with reference to the different strata of Holy Scripture. It is in general rare to make direct use of Old Testament passages, because their difference from, nay, incompatibility with, the Christian hope cannot be concealed. Scarcely in any point but that of the national restoration of Israel is it here necessary to enter into argument for a really Christian employment of Old Testament prophecy. As regards the New Testament, so far as the evidence supplied by the Church is concerned, the principle is not yet generally applied that items peculiar to particular Books can only claim to be accepted when their connexion with what is common to all is manifest. This rule comes into practical application in regard to, among other things, the thousand years reign of the Apocalypse, provided that one is not resolved to read it into the other Books. Further, when we look at the relation of the evidence furnished by the Church to that of Jesus Himself, the sublime certainty of the latter, combined with great reserve as to actual content, is

very significant; and this has a bearing on the question how far there is no permanent standard contained even in the utterances of Jesus.

A quite unique position is assigned to the *Revelation of John*, in the circle of those who have a strong tendency to contemplate the future. It is the only Book of the New Testament, they affirm, of which the main purpose is prophetic, and it testifies to its own value with unparalleled emphasis. Against this latter argument Luther himself voiced the suspicion that this is not the manner of the highest class of prophets. The history of its exegesis has, however, made this one-sided preference for the Apocalypse altogether impossible. The moderate form of the interpretation which applied it to the *history of the Church*, e.g. Luther's explanation of the Dragon as meaning the Papacy, left great parts of it unexplained: logically carried out, this mode of interpretation is a failure owing to the violent and extraordinary twists which have to be given to it; not to speak of the arbitrary limits which it sets to the history of God's working in the future, or of its failure to include it in this prophetic summary of Church history. This is true of the representation of the three angels as referring to Luther, Chemnitz, and the opponents of Callixtus (Calov), as of Hengstenberg's marking off of periods, in which the thousand years reign is actually ranked as already past, and Magog signifies the demagogic outburst of 1848. The interpretation which applies it to the *History of the Kingdom* (von Hofmann), high as it stands above that just described, and true as is its leading thought, that in the history of the Kingdom of God during its development upon earth, certain fundamental forces and powers realize themselves in ever new and more complicated forms, certain fundamental laws coming ever anew into

operation in the process, is yet as theory in contradiction with the actual matter of the Apocalypse. The interpretation of it as applying to the *end of the world* (Kliefoth), which lays the fulfilment of all the prophecies in the future, and indeed in the last period immediately preceding Christ's return, is quite as clearly an expedient of despair, induced by the recognition of the impossibility of those other methods, as it is one that must fail to make clear what could be the purpose of such a prophecy for the generation to which it had been given in the first instance. If then these three keys do not open the mysterious door, the believer in the only mode of interpretation that remains, viz. that which depends upon *contemporary history*, can confess without reserve or any ambiguity the high and enduring value which these testimonies have even for very different circumstances, and approve of the judgment of the Church with regard to the inclusion of this Book in the Canon, not for the sake of the Letters to the Churches alone. Only he cannot value it as if it were the Magna Charta of truth for Eschatology: it has only that importance which, in accordance with the norms of Scripture-proof already indicated, belongs to it in the New Testament as a whole.

In connexion with the Apocalypse, another question forces itself upon us with special insistence, one which affects all parts of Dogmatics, but Eschatology in particular, that as to the *symbolic character* of religious language. To what extent and to what degree such symbolism prevails in this department ought to be clearly and fully set before the mind. Not only are cities and walls, seas and hills, thunder and lightning, white robes and palm branches, and heavenly beasts, symbolic; but even what is surely the greatest expression of Christian hope, "to be ever with the Lord, to be

present with the Lord" (Phil. III.; 2 Cor. v.), and the sublime description of the perfected Church (Heb. XII. 22 f.), are symbolic in character. *And indeed to a greater degree* than is the case elsewhere in religious expressions; for the simple reason that *in Eschatology* we speak of *communion with God under other conditions of existence* than those of the present, and have no words in which to describe it but those which are taken from *present* conditions. Now that is true by no means only for the separate symbols mentioned above; so that it will come to be looked upon more and more as time goes on as irreverent to give them definite particular meanings, as for instance to think of the thunder, as was at one time done, as cannon, or more cautiously as "compressions of the air in heaven," and of the frogs as the importunate voices of the press. It is true also of those sublime and simple phrases. For to be "with" the Lord assumes the existence of Space; and "to be for ever with Him," that of Time; whereas we do not intend to assert that Space and Time will exist for our consciousness as at present. But as has happened to us so often on our way through Dogmatics, the thoroughly clear statement of the difficulty removes the danger of it for faith. We recalled to mind previously that every utterance of our higher mental life whatever has a symbolic character, absolutely cannot be cleared of a tinge of sense perception, not even in the fundamental propositions of Logic—we cannot do without the word ground, which is so clearly derived from the world of the senses (pp. 47, 245, 333, 504). Now the reason why this character must be noticeable most of all in statements of Eschatology, has just been mentioned. Consequently the validity of these statements is quite independent of it and is not in the least weakened, provided that cogent reasons can be offered for the validity of Christian faith as hope,

as for its truth in general. Only, no doubt, the important principle is at the same time confirmed afresh, that each separate proposition is only so far valid as it is inseparably bound up with the pure essence of believing hope. But because we are in principle delivered from the secret dread that a symbolic expression is an untrue expression, the designation of something unreal, which is only present in fancy, we can devote ourselves without hesitation to the understanding even of the most figurative expressions. The "eating and drinking anew in the Kingdom of God," causes us no offence; rather it is to us a welcome phrase, to express the full liveliness of the hope, the complete reality of the future world.

And thus our discussion of method ends in a word regarding the division of Eschatology. We must in the following exposition clearly distinguish between the normative fundamental ideas of Christian hope and the separate branches of the subject, which cannot be worked out with like definiteness and universal cogency. This latter assertion holds in particular with regard to the stages of the eschatological process. For instance, that the consummation is associated with the full Revelation of Jesus, is implied in believing on Him; but not with equal clearness, the mode in which this Revelation comes about, as regards the preparation for it and the circumstances by which it is accompanied.

The Fundamental Ideas of Christian Hope as to the Future

In order to preserve the undeniable importance and the impressive certainty of these ideas, and at the same time to describe them with that prudence and caution which the nature of the subject requires, *Schleiermacher's dialectical discussion* remains the best introduction to

this doctrine. His analysis of the difficulties leads him to the verge of scepticism, and therefore the recognition of what that scepticism is ultimately based upon is the best means to overcome it. And the wealth of points of view which he presents to us acts as a test to show whether anything essential is passed over. Faith, he says, demands the perfecting of the Church, and can, it may be assumed, make clear to itself what this demand implies. The perfected Church is, so to speak, the home of perfect prayer, and the ideal which we strive for. But, he adds, in this world it cannot be realized. For new generations are always being born who have still to be brought to Christ. We are therefore compelled to place it in another world; but of that other world we have not the remotest conception. As regards the hope of the individual, the case is in a sense reversed. His union with the Redeemer demands a continuance of existence after death. But for this continued existence we cannot conceive any corresponding content. It is also an unsatisfactory device to impart content to this idea of continued life which has force in reference to the individual, by means of the idea of the completion of the Church. For then we come upon the same difficulties as before. For the completion of the Church no place can be found, and for the continued existence of the individual no content; because the completion of the Church is not consistent with the continued development of the individual, and this latter is not consistent with the completion of the Church. If a completed Church is realized, can an individual still in process of development be complete?

Whatever one's opinion of this discussion may be, at least the clear distinction drawn between the individual and the Church, and the attempt made to find a relation between them, signifies an advance. For in Eschatology

previous to that time, there was frequently nothing more than statements regarding one or other, the individual or the community, at the expense of the other point of view. Further, there is the clear apprehension of the question as to the content of the other life, and as to its reality. A similar gain, enrichment and elucidation of the points of view, and at the same time a glimpse of the great fact itself, when, as here, attention is directed beyond the range of earthly experience to the unseen, discloses itself in the further introductory dialectical discussions which Schleiermacher develops, and which he presents in connexion with the title "Last Things". This, he says, designates the unending existence as the end of the almost vanishing temporal. But it can also be conceived of as the development of what is begun, the temporal being therefore viewed as the introduction and preparatory stage. And again he finely remarks that the first idea, that of the end, the catastrophe, has a closer relation to the idea of the completing of the Church; for of course in that, we think of all that is not Divine as cast out: the second idea, that of development, shows more relationship with that of continued personal existence. At the same time, according to him, the first idea emphasizes the conception of reward and punishment, and so that of Christ as Judge; while the second favours the idea of Christ as the bestower of blessedness.

If one is to find fault with the way in which all these points of view have been sceptically employed to dissolve the certainty of hope, one ought at some time to have found them also a positive enrichment of faith, such as merits thankfulness. Next, however, they themselves call for similar criticism. On what matter shall it be concentrated? Not upon isolated objections in detail, which could easily be found; such as that the idea of

cataclysm has reference essentially to the completion of the Church, that of development essentially to the perfecting of the individual; as have also the ideas of the Judge and the Bestower of Blessedness. For while certainly a subtle relation of ideas is thus brought out, it is more correct to emphasize the significance of both points of view, alike for the individual and for the Church, by grasping the inner unity of Judgment and Salvation, of cataclysm and development, as our religion presents it. But this inward connexion is the very point at issue; or more accurately, the point is to present the two ideas in the underlying basis from which they spring, in order that the Christian hope may appear in its altogether incomparable distinctiveness and uniqueness. By recognizing this, and in no other way, can the doubt which is conclusive for Schleiermacher be overcome. In the last issue, all these elaborate considerations of his, independent and unconnected as they appear, are governed by the axiom that *what is perfect cannot really exist.* That is the meaning of all the statements cited,—that there is no place for the perfecting of the Church, no content for the continued existence of the individual. That axiom lies like a ban over all the dogmas of the Christian faith, the worth of which Schleiermacher yet feels so very deeply. That idea, which he never clearly expresses in this connexion, he yet weaves like a web round living hopes until they have lost all life, all definite form, all fresh colour. *Against this spell only one means can prevail,—the undiminished content of Christian hope.* Because he does not clearly enough bring out this peculiar and unique content, he has not power to burst the fetters. If it be recognized, then there is no more terror in the anxiety lest we may not be able to speak of perfection otherwise than as a myth or after the manner of the

visionary, as historical, yet beyond history; or as earthly, yet more than earthly. In the content of assured faith lies the power which will not allow the limits of our knowledge to become an obstruction to our hope, but will understand and utilize them.

We have thus, however, marked out our further course. Even more definitely than Schleiermacher do we distinguish between the *content* of the eschatological dogmas, and the *problem of time* in relation to the eternal life of which faith is assured.

The CONTENT follows simply from the nature of our faith. That was the starting-point of our whole discussion in the foregoing (cf. pp. 836 ff. and all the references), and it needs not now to be explained in detail. We saw that the hope as to the future is always bound up with religion, and that its force and peculiar type entirely corresponds to the peculiar nature of the definite particular religion. The Egyptian religion, for instance, is a religion of death, and yet not a religion of hope in any sense which is akin to ours. The Greek, full of life and movement as it is, is yet a religion without a future, blooming and decaying like Nature herself, always alike in beauty, charming and melancholy. The Israelites believed that their God would bring a new order of things to pass,—but their God, the God of Israel, as they conceived of Him. When, however, the Revelation came to its fulness, then in that fulfilment was born an assured hope which reaches out not merely beyond any set of present earthly circumstances, but beyond all earthly development whatever, and not into a dreamland beyond the grave, but into a bright eternity with newness of life in perfection. The Kingdom of God, that highest good which God freely gives in Christ through the Holy Spirit, for the realization of which we receive stimulus

and strength to co-operate, through the same faith by which God's gift becomes ours ; that Kingdom of God—the inexhaustible riches of which, as conferring privilege and as imposing responsibility, it is the object of Dogmatics and of Ethics to expound—is in these two main respects present and future, belongs to this world and to the next, is earthly and heavenly : it is, and it has not yet come. That is so, just because it means this sovereignty of this God and not something else ; just because in it we have communion with the God who alone is good, because eternal Love is bestowed upon us, and in that love we may learn to love. This is a matter of the present, else we would have no communion with Him ; it is eternal for the same reason. And it is eternal, too, not only because our earthly life, which is life in communion with Him, breaking off in death, would else not be communion with Him ; but also because the conditions of this earthly existence are not yet those which fully correspond to this communion of love. For sin, the guilt and power of which are in principle annulled through faith in God's forgiving and renewing love, must be completely, to its very furthest consequences, done away with. That is not the only reason, however ; but for created spirits communion with the eternal God realizes itself gradually in Divinely ordained stages of existence. Whether we can obtain any clear ideas as to this, and how far they carry us, we shall consider afterwards. The point here is simply the inner necessity of the idea itself as an inalienable part of Christian faith. The New Testament bears witness to it most emphatically in bold antitheses. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," says St. Paul (2 Cor. v. 17), and along with that we have, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth," and "They themselves, the children, wait for the Redemption" (Rom.

VIII. 18 ff.). Or in John's words: "Now are we the sons of God," and "It doth not yet appear what we shall be" (1 John III. 1 ff.). All that, however, is founded upon the saying of Jesus: "They that hunger after righteousness shall be filled"; "The pure in heart shall see God". The content of Christian hope is nothing absolutely new, different as to quality, else it would not be the hope of that faith which knows itself to be really in communion with God through Christ, that faith which nothing can separate from the love of God. But this in itself so unique, even perfect in kind, presses to escape its bonds, and to develop without hindrance to a form free from all imperfection, adequate to its own essential nature. And that which is perfect is not first, but that which is imperfect, not "the spiritual man, but the natural" (1 Cor. XV.).

That is true as a matter of course, again quite apart from the hindering power of sin, with regard to all the particular aspects of our salvation; and if one were to try to present it exhaustively, the whole material of Christian Dogmatics and Ethics would have to be gone over. The experience of the pulpit shows how there is no exaggeration there whatever. For while it is true that the preaching of directly eschatological sermons is not so usual or so necessary as it once was, the "Church of believers," the expression being used in the sense of faith, not of any party in the Church, is much more quick to note, and rightly, the unaffected, unforced tone of assured hope which must vibrate through all living preaching of the Gospel, and which alone exhibits every subject whatever in its full depth, even that of eternity. Where that tone is heard, the most intimate mutual sympathy between pulpit and pew prevails, with far more certainty than where there is merely uniformity in the belief of well-known and well-loved dogmatic ideas.

Only by way of example, a few points may be mentioned. Even as it is realized here on earth, communion with God is without doubt the moving power *whenever the fundamental forces of our spirit are put in action.* But how imperfect the process is as yet! The man whose piety is characterized by strong feeling is troubled that the will does not keep pace with the warmth of emotion. The man whose will is dominant often complains that freshness of feeling is lacking. Both defects may alternate with one another in the same heart. Or how often is the one-sided prevalence of intellect a danger for the strong-minded man, a danger either of placing too high a value on this gift for the purposes of faith, or of being by it estranged from the highest good! And yet for the true, complete Christian, clearness of knowledge is essential: fear of thought is want of reverence for God. And therefore we find those who are most intellectual even in the first period of the Church expressing the greatest longing that faith may give place to sight, that we may know as we are known (1 Cor. VIII. 1 ff., XIII. 12 f.). But now it is for sight that they long in which there lies no opposition to love, to the inmost joy of feeling, to the strongest power of will. And this certainly not in undifferentiated uniformity. If we know as we are known, then we are personal realizations of special thoughts of God, each of us something special even in the life of perfection. Or to speak the language of the Apocalypse, just when the new name has been set upon the foreheads of those who have overcome, has it become completely true that God knows each one by his own name. How much richer in all these respects is the hope which takes its standard from Revelation than that, for instance, which our older theologians express by their propositions, is shown by every Compendium on the Vision of God which is

first and foremost a matter of intellect, and only in the second instance is connected with perfection of will; and which consists of knowledge of the Divine Attributes, of the persons of the Trinity, and so on. Thus J. J. Moser is moved as if by a real discovery when, in contrast to this "heaven of the theologians," there rises upon him the conception of the concrete blessedness of the New Testament, and in particular the perfecting of the communion of love is recognized as the basis of blessedness.

This has already brought us to a second example, the reconciliation in heaven of the *individual and the community*, a reconciliation which is not a wiping out of the distinction but the realization of its full and rightful extent, through removal of the opposition. Ethics shows how all moral effort in whatever sphere is specially directed to the preparation for this reconciliation, which does not minimize, but rather completes, the distinctiveness (Ethics, pp. 140 ff.); but it is for the present no more than preparation, and remains but a prophecy. Perfect can the reconciliation be, only when both have completely found the point of union in which alone they can be completely one,—in their difference, the creaturely image of God the Creator. There come from every nation those who sit with the Patriarchs, and with the Lord Himself in His Kingdom; the great and the little fully united in perfect communion. Meanwhile we learn to understand one another and to work together, but understanding and co-operation have their limits amongst neighbours, even among Christians. These limits are, we may suppose, often grounded in our sin, though not solely in it, but also in that incompleteness which, according to God's will, is the law of development upon earth. Here, too, is the place where the truly Christian hope, that those

who on earth were united in Him who is Eternal will eternally meet together, is duly recognized; being quite distinct alike from sentimentality and from sanctimoniousness. This applies equally to the hope that kindred spirits whom the circumstances of the world had kept apart on earth, will be united with each other.

This last thought we may follow out in a specially important connexion. *Spirit and Nature* do not yet stand to one another in the most intimate conceivable union, and the hope of the Church has from the very beginning directed its flight towards this goal. In the night of disease or of unsuccessful labour, the latter shines before the poorest who may scarcely ever have heard the grand words spirit and nature. The ablest weary themselves with this riddle in their Art and Science. Certainly even faith is not conscious of possessing any powerful magic formulæ for the solution of it; but it sets itself earnestly against two fallacious solutions for its own sake,—against a Spiritualism whose abstractions fall far short of that reality, pulsing with life, which the new world has for faith; though the latter does understand Spiritualism as a protection against fanaticism. So it opposes a Realism which is only a badly disguised pious sensuality; though it recognizes in this the earnestness of real hope in contrast to all attempts to explain it away. Faith itself is content with the assurance that all that we call Nature, both in ourselves and in the world without, shall become the symbol and instrument of the Spirit, in a degree so high and so deep, so inclusive and so unlimited, as we have as yet no experience of, and can only dimly descry in rare moments of exalted experience, which we involuntarily describe as life in the eternal. Art is therefore for the Christian a vague prophecy of this consummation (cf. Ethics, pp. 390 ff.),

and the Revelation of John, strange as its particular symbols may be to us Western people, is a sublime hymn celebrating the oneness of the good and the beautiful in their most exalted form. On earth we seek this oneness so readily as we do, to gain the approval of conscience. "There" the good and the beautiful have really found one another at last. To express such a hope, faith thankfully makes use of the Biblical word Glory. It is wide enough to suit itself in the course of centuries to every change of ideas, having behind it in Scripture a varied history; and it is yet definite enough to express ever anew the deepest sense of such changing ideas,—the clothing of the spirit in material form, the "manifestation of holiness" (Bengel), in short that coherence of spirit and nature, of the good and the beautiful, which we have spoken of. But as regards further speculations, as for instance that nature is the basis of existence for the finite, faith maintains her reserve. The history of human thought has too often shown how far they are from furnishing clear results, how often they have without reason even endangered the interests of faith (cf. pp. 384, 397).

But having thus defined the content of our Christian hope, we are now called upon to add something with regard to the FORM of the perfected existence, of the other world which is made sure for faith; in short, to discuss the *problem of time.* At least all the other questions lead to that problem, even that which at first sight seems to stand on an equal footing with it,—as to the *place* of this celestial life. For our early theologians, there was an intelligible sense in speaking of a heavenly "place," one that is "certain though unknown"; earlier still it was actually treated as if it were known, and was sought beyond the planet-spheres. If it be

said that even Holy Scripture shares this conception, we may answer that on the one hand it is quite natural that it should, bearing in mind what was said as to the necessarily symbolic nature of its expressions, which as might be expected are drawn from the conceptions prevailing at the time; and on the other hand the New Testament, as though it were of design, bears witness to the inadequacy of such expressions. For instance the Epistle to the Hebrews characteristically says in one place that Jesus hath passed through the heavens (the heavenly spheres of the ancients) to the throne of God (IV. 14), and in another place that He has entered into heaven itself (IX. 24). In particular, however, the peculiar use of the word "new" (the new heaven and the new earth), the phrase, "Behold I make all things new," and the emphatic way in which the visible is set in contrast to the invisible, is an oft-repeated testimony to the felt inadequacy of all words to express the "unutterable" (cf. 2 Cor. XII.); though it would be unhistorical and essentially inexact to see in that the denial of those conceptions of space altogether. We have long since grown accustomed not to seek the heaven of faith, the really actual and not imagined heaven, in any locality of the world, which to our present knowledge presents itself under the form of space. For even in the most distant and most glorious places of that universe we certainly would not find the "things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, which have not entered into the heart of man". What we would find would be the same forces, the same materials, the same "Nature" which is not yet the pure organ and symbol of Spirit: we would not find the new world but only a new province of the old. If we go on to speak of the old, transitory world, then we at once enter upon the problem of time, to which

modern knowledge has taught us to subordinate entirely that of space. For in our hope we can comparatively easily leave the question of locality out of account, by turning with all our sympathy to the incomparable content of it. The question of locality disappears, so to speak, as in faith we lose ourselves in the glory of that new treasure which God will provide. But the distinction between now and then we cannot disregard. This question of *Time and Eternity* meets us in various forms.

The *first* and greatest difficulty is by no means always quite clearly realized. It is this, that for the final completed existence, we postulate at once a continuance of development and the cessation of it. It is not at all merely an eternal present of what is past and finished, though even in that there is difficulty enough for our present knowledge. But on that point we could set our minds at rest with comparative ease. Rather we mean new experience, nay a life which alone fully deserves the name of life, yet one which at the same time is in itself complete and finished. That was no doubt the main ground of Schleiermacher's scepticism: what is, is no longer in process of becoming, develops no more; and what is not developing, is not eternal life. Before such a doubt as this, one must keep quite still, and probe it to its very depths. Much of the scoffing talk that is again and again with smug self-satisfaction indulged in, of course troubles the Christian little. If he is asked whether eternity will not be wearisome, he can answer with another question, whether it does not always give new pleasure to return to a work of art. Only the spirit which has no ideas which it counts valuable is ever bored at all. But if Art might really weary us, of love we never grow tired. Of love as sport perhaps, but not of a love which, under

the influence of a higher will, is roused to surrender its own will and yet to assert it; a love which has not this or that object, but is fixed on God in the Kingdom of God. Else this objection would certainly tell also against the very idea of God. But if the objection be raised that such an eternal striving would be the opposite of blissful rest, would even be a remnant of unhappiness in heaven, the Christian may reply not only that it is a strange thing to start such opposite objections, that of *ennui* and that of the unrest of fullest activity, but that this thought is as remote from him as the other. For perfect love is blessedness; love which is taken up into the love of God, is Divine blessedness. But in one respect such a justification easily appears as an evasion, if one has not first understood the objection in a deeper sense. In this sense namely, that as a matter of fact we cannot conceive the stimulus of the unattained, the strain of means towards end, removed from our present experience, not even in the highest sphere of our present activity, the ethical. Does not the well-known saying that "for perfect beings there is no Ethics," imply an insurmountable barrier to our hope?

The Spirit which is oppressed by such objections may revive somewhat at the sight of the poverty of these last conceptions, which is often carefully concealed for a while by the boasting polemic of our opponents. Think of such ideas as the "everlasting circle" or "eternal recurrence". That, too, is Eschatology, though it is usually veiled in gentle silence by the followers of such prophets, enthusiastic as they are on other points of their doctrine. And the reason lies not merely in the intrinsic poverty of the ideas, but quite as much, or vastly more, in the impossibility of carrying out such thoughts to any logical completeness.

But the sterling honesty of Christian hope has a better foundation; and that is the experience of regeneration. This is an experience here in time of an existence which is in its own way complete; which could not, however, have this character of completeness, if it did not contain as an integral part of itself an impulse toward self-realization which is really felt to be eternal. The famous saying of Luther—"being justified, we perform things just"—here finds its eschatological application. And this experience, this oneness which may even now be known, of what is attained with what is to be attained, of rest with action; this determination of our spirit experienced as at once esthetic and teleological, enters our consciousness not as something foreign—that is so only when conversion or regeneration is conceived of in a non-Protestant way—but as the true, appointed life of our spirit, predicted and foreshadowed upon all the bright, elevated spots of our existence, whether the experience is directly religious or not—in the quiet collectedness of scientific work, in the restful contemplation of art, in the purposeful pursuit of a lofty aim. These foreshadowings and premonitions come to fulfilment in communion through faith with the living God, as in a perfected existence in which we first come to understand what being perfected means, what it signifies to have and for that very reason to desire still to obtain. But it is not as if the Christian, on the basis of this experience in time, would set out to give a clear and detailed picture of his full liberation in eternity, or thought that by complaisant drawing of distinctions, not altogether valueless in their place, between words like perfection and development, he had got to the heart of the matter: he more than any one else knows that he is free from the dreams of fancy, because he possesses more, has the confidence of trust. For this

is the meaning of our whole exposition, as it was formulated at the outset: in the content of our Christian hope lies the power which elevates us above feeling the limit of our insight into the actual form in which it will clothe itself as a danger to our faith, or the ability to overcome it if it does become so. That most insistent of all doubts, that for perfect beings there would be no ethics, is laid to rest for the hope of eternity by our experience of salvation here on earth, so far as faith requires that this should be. The more we have attained, we strive the more, not the less. More accurately expressed, being made the recipients of infinite bounty, we begin to cherish infinite aspirations; and the fear lest these should come to an end causes us as little anxiety as the question whether God can be eternally God. With reason did Melanchthon declare that he had joy in the prospect of eternity, because he then could sin no more. Here at the close, we see again and with especial clearness, how valuable is the idea of God as One who in Christ has revealed Himself to us as Eternal Love. This idea of God shields us also from the temptation, induced by the difficulty of the thought which was quite frankly stated, to hope indeed for a perfection of created spirits under other conditions of existence, but to conceive that the moment of perfecting brings with it the end, that the highest blessedness means absorption in God, to see the dissolution of the individual in Divine love (E. Troeltsch). From the standpoint of the Neo-Platonic idea of God, one may call that a euthanasia, but it would be death in the most fearful sense, cruelty in a God who has revealed Himself to us as love, that loves with an eternal love. Unless indeed absorption in God were so conceived of as not to exclude personal life. But in that case, why make use of the confusing

language? As it stands, it signifies a triumph of anti-personal mysticism over that personal, ethical character of our religion which in other matters is justly insisted on so much.

A *second* aspect of the time-problem is the relation of development to cataclysm. Here the question is, so to speak, as to the form of the transition from the process in time to eternal perfection. We came to the conclusion already that it is not accurate to associate the idea of cataclysm only with the perfecting of the whole, and that of development only with the perfecting of the individual. Both ideas apply to each of the two things, provided that we hold strictly to the Christian idea of perfection, which is opposed equally to a perfection by magical art and a perfection by mere gradual progress. New Testament expressions prove that too in the clearest manner. Jesus gives the advice that wheat and tares should be allowed to grow together until the harvest,—but the harvest comes: the harvest is the judgment. And whenever the idea of judgment in its original force has been obscured, Christianity has always been robbed of part of its moral character. In Eschatology this idea again stands out strongly in the special light which this doctrine casts upon it; and conversely, light is cast backward upon the importance which was attached to it in previous sections.

Finally, it seems at this point that the further duty lies upon Dogmatics of considering the problem of Time on its own principles, or rather of indicating its attitude to the discussions of it which have been carried on elsewhere. For the two questions which have now been spoken of are still only particular aspects of this deep and serious question. That, no doubt, is the case; still the challenge which opponents throw at us, frequently with the scorn that anticipates success, has lost its

terrors. All those who never seriously ask themselves the question what Time is, may, and no doubt will continue to hold the most nonsensical conceptions as to *eternal* life. But they will not easily be able to flatter themselves now, that in what they put forward they raise a well-founded objection. To the problem of time, ingenious arguments have been directed from the most varied standpoints, and thought in dealing with it has revealed riddle after riddle. But in support of the hope we have expressed, we do not need to follow these in detail. Lotze, for instance, says (Microkosmus, 2nd ed., III. 596 ff.) : "When we identify things present with things real, and declare things past to be non-existent, we shrink from pressing the point : there is a difference which we cannot explain, but which yet we feel, between things past and that which has never been and never will be." Or again Paulsen : Either time is the condition of the real, in which case the condition of the real is that it be in the present. For if not, then it has to be in the past or in the future ; i.e. in what no longer exists, or what has not yet come into being. But in the present, there can be nothing whatever ; hence the past and the future would be real. Or Time is a form of intuition ; in which case it is at least a form under which the eternal appears. But then why should it not be possible that an eternal consciousness other than that in time might be experienced? Whoever denied that would first have to make it intelligible how the present consciousness in time could arise or come to an end." These are valuable trains of thought. Still their importance for Dogmatics lies not in the greater or less conviction which they carry in detail, but in the clear proof which they furnish how grave is the enigma, how ingrained the limitation of our knowledge, constituted by time. We repeat again

what we have so often said as we advanced, but now say for the last time in this peculiar eschatological connexion : it is not one enigma among many, one limitation among others ; but *the* enigma, *the* limitation. Here, however, we can also say with especial confidence, that it is a mystery which we can well endure, a limitation which we willingly recognize, because it is one which is understood as being the limitation of our creaturely existence at the present stage of our life ; and this creaturely existence is the intelligible because the experienced preliminary to our real personal communion with God who is a person. And in saying that, we explain for the purposes of the present question only, what Jesus meant by that sublime statement which He addressed to those who doubted, and which includes the whole of His Eschatology : ye know not the power of God, of God who establishes an eternal loving communion with Himself. Where this love has become a certainty, the doubt of which we have spoken is overcome, is made simply a stimulus to enter more and more deeply into this loving communion. From this standpoint of faith, speculative ideas regarding a different experience of what we now call time, and in consonance with this regarding a different experience over and above of what we now call space (cf. pp. 866 f.) are in no way underrated. But they are deliberately excluded from the Christian faith, in the interest of the security of faith, and on valid grounds of reason ; as has been shown by the discussion of principles in our Apologetics. The world of our hope is not made more "real" by them if they are admitted into Dogmatics, but more doubtful, because ideas are mixed up with it for which conclusive evidence can never be adduced. The fact that it cannot be adduced is shown by the criticism of our intellectual power, which is independent of religious wishes and fears.

Eschatology and the Problem of Time

At the close of this discussion, one which has brought us nearer the limits of Dogmatics than we ventured to go in other questions, the problem we started with will have struck us more clearly than ever as the one which is, properly speaking, decisive—the unity of cessation of growth and continued growth, of completeness and experience which is ever new. But now also there is no evasion, but rather an end for our study which is in conformity with the drift of it, when we recall to our minds those expressions furnished for this problem which are the simplest and at the same time cannot be surpassed—so far as it is really no problem, but an immediate certainty for faith. Thus we have the Pauline saying about laying hold of the victor's prize, one which cannot possibly signify for effort like his the cessation of effort; but it is equally certain that the effort is inseparably connected with eternal satisfaction. And the same thing is meant by the phrase in Hebrews, entering into God's rest, His rest which as such is eternal creation—that phrase, the grandest explanation of which, as we have it in Augustine, testifies at the same time to the inadequacy of our human speech, and that because of the inadequacy of our present knowledge.

To develop *the value of such a future hope for the present life* of the individual Christian and that of the whole Church, belongs to *Christian Ethics.* There it would fall to be shown how the optimism or pessimism which is found independently among men and which so easily reverts to its opposite, is transcended, and how from this hope there springs that prevailing frame of mind which combines fidelity in the smallest matters with large thoughts, so that one rests in eternal peace and has no time to grow weary. But this reference to Ethics must

be made with the greatest possible emphasis. For otherwise the objection is easily raised that the expositions of Eschatology in Dogmatics are not "realistic," indeed not "truthful" enough; seeing that instead of speaking of the future on earth, they vaguely repeat Scriptural pronouncements. But that the work of Dogmatics is not discharged by the accomplishment of the task of Ethics here alluded to, we have already pointed out; and that the work of Dogmatics does not necessarily exhibit the defect complained of, our presentation of the subject may perhaps serve to show.

Dogmatics has not as a rule been content with the fundamental ideas of the future hope which have thus far been developed. It added further a doctrine of the

Stages of the Eschatological Process

In fact as a rule it devoted itself far more to these than to the fundamental ideas, and often did not treat the latter accurately enough. Such an estimate of the relative values of the two undertakings has been rendered impossible for us by the whole of the preliminary investigation. We may rest satisfied that the task which we have now first discharged is the most important. Still we cannot describe the other as an artificial and useless one. Nor is it a task set us, as might perhaps be supposed, simply by separate texts of Scripture, though certainly these bulk somewhat largely in connexion with it; rather, it grows naturally from the chief problem. And that for two reasons. First, the perfection of which we spoke is not something complete and separate, without any relations. At any rate its relation backwards to our present life forces itself involuntarily upon our thoughts. Is it to be expected soon? Will it evolve itself like a drama in separate

acts? Will it be announced beforehand by certain signs? Will any more exact idea be possible for us as to the decisive moment itself (we cannot speak in other language)? Further, the completion of the Church does not coincide with the departure of individuals from this present life. From this fact new questions necessarily arise. Is there for these an intermediate state until the final consummation? And is this life in the case of all people, however different the careers marked out for men in the life on earth may be, what finally decides as to their lot for eternity; or may salvation still be offered and accepted under certain conditions in the after-life? Such questions can only appear really useless to one to whom the fundamental ideas of the Christian hope have become utterly vague. One who is firmly assured of these ideas will seek from them an answer to these questions, however cautious that answer may be; and being so minded, will gladly also seek guidance to it from separate texts of Scripture, without in any way departing from the principles governing the use of Scripture.

But if now we were to turn immediately to this task, and seek to reach what conclusion we could arrive at on this basis as to the eschatological process, we should neglect the fact that in the history of Eschatology certain

Fundamental types of thought

are presented to us in more or less consistently elaborated form. Of these we would not gain any vivid impression if we merely mentioned their favourite formulæ cursorily in the development of what seems to us the true opinion. Their strength really lies in the influence they exercise as consistent ways of looking at things.

Nor does that influence belong simply to the past. What we have said applies to two types especially, those which are designated by the titles Chiliasm and Apokatastasis. The general schemes of doctrine which were most important for us elsewhere, those of the Old Protestant Orthodoxy and of Rationalism, need not be more than mentioned again here. For the points of most importance for their conception of the eschatological process have already been mentioned in another connexion. It was a novel and a grand characteristic of the *first* scheme that its Eschatology was deduced from the idea of Justification, that assurance of Salvation was upheld even in the face of death and in death, and—what is only the reverse side of this fact—that the feeling of responsibility with regard to life on earth in which this assurance of Salvation is acquired, was deepened; and that by these means the whole phantasm of Purgatory with all its presuppositions and consequences was got rid of (cf. Smalk. Art.). One cannot hold such favourable opinion of what it said regarding the Judgment which awaits the individual at the moment of death, regarding putting off the "Old Adam" just at that moment, regarding the shutting out of every possibility of Salvation for those who had been passed over upon earth; in short, regarding the limitation of its view to the fate of the individual and as settled too under all circumstances on this earth, the depreciation of the universal Judgment and of the consummation of the Church so that they become in truth an insignificant episode. In one word, we must judge unfavourably of the one-sided though sublime individualism of Old Protestant Eschatology. Further, there were many mere repetitions of traditional doctrines, as to the Second Coming, the Resurrection-body and such like; though these were most frequently modified in

extreme points. *Rationalistic* Eschatology, again, found its justification principally in criticism of the errors of Orthodoxy in detail ; while its proper leading thought of endless growth in perfection did not do justice to the essence of the Gospel, and left no room at all for the eschatological process with which we are at present dealing. We must not forget, however, that the conviction of immortality even in this limited form, was to very many a source of strength in life such as the much richer hope of present-day Orthodoxy has by no means succeeded in building up again in the general consciousness.

The doctrine of Apokatastasis, Restoration, derives its name from Matthew xvii. 11. Everything is to be re-established, brought back to the original condition of perfection. There the emphasis does not necessarily rest on the word "back," upon the return to the original : this element may even be entirely set aside. The main point is not that all should become as it was, but as it should be, and further that this applies not to anything and everything, but to what is most important ; in other words, that the Divine plan of salvation should be positively realized in the case of all men, that all should become participant in the eternal salvation. The history of the doctrine of restoration is of special interest. Among the great Alexandrines it took the place of the Chiliasm of the ancient Church and then became the ruling type of Orthodoxy among the Greek fathers, till it was condemned with other traditions from Origen ; though first the practical earnestness of Chrysostom took exception to it. In the Middle Ages it was confined to the heretical sects. The Augsburg Confession rejects it as a doctrine of the fanatics (Art. 17). In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was taken

up by agitators who were prepared to suffer martyrdom on behalf of it, and was often based upon special Revelation (Petersen); and in pious circles here and there was handed on as a sort of secret tradition, particularly in the communities founded by Michael Hahn which were much influenced by Oetinger. Rationalism must have had much sympathy with it; the theology of Supernaturalism offered but little resistance. Schleiermacher's statement, too, became more and more the expression of a strong feeling: we may be able to rest satisfied that many should be passed over in time, but not that they should be passed over for eternity, on the assumption of a continuance of existence after death. The few examples show at once that the basis of this theologumenon is, on the one hand, of a general speculative nature. It rests upon ideas regarding human freedom as a form of Divine omnipotence; regarding the nature of the finite in general and of the individual person in particular, as a necessary introduction of distinctions into the Infinite Divine life, and their absorption again in its unity. On the other hand the doctrine takes a more definitely Christian form, starting from reflections upon God's all-embracing love, and from Christian sympathy as extending to all. The two tendencies are naturally found mixed together in the most varied ways. We may even say that there is no such speculation which did not lay stress upon the religious feelings, but also scarcely any Apokatastasis of a religious type which kept quite free from pronouncements of a speculative nature. In the first group, the chief distinction has reference to the question whether the continued existence of the individual is unambiguously asserted or not. When this is the case the idea of restoration is applied by preference to solve the problem of Sin, to lull anxiety regarding it by representing it as a stage

through which the finite personality must necessarily pass (cf. p. 466). Here we have to do in the main with the other group. What it has to say regarding God's love leading home the lost children from the utmost parts of the world, takes hold of us often by the warmth with which it is set forth; as do also its references to the disturbance which must be introduced into the blessedness of the blessed, of those made perfect in love, by the remembrance of those who are shut out from God's love. But tried by the standard of the Christian idea of God, can this opinion be maintained: "Because God's Grace has destined all for sonship, and ever seeks to lead each one to it, at the end of finite history every one *must* be won by infinite grace, the final result *must* be the redemption of all"? Is this love which compels, really love; and is the love which is returned, being unavoidable, really love in return? Are we not forsaking the ethical categories and slipping into those of necessary action, though perhaps the psychical processes are the finest? And if we keep in mind what was said, with clear recognition of the opposing difficulties, as to this ethical character of our religion in stating the doctrine of God, of Man, and of Christ, these objections which are cited as to the lot of the blessed do not hold. They are blessed in God. If God is blessed in the blessedness of those who consent to receive His offered love in trust, the conclusion follows naturally for us. Only one must state at this point with more emphasis than is usually done, that we have not yet a final decision as to the fate of those who exclude themselves; for the idea of eternal punishment is often emphatically applied to recommend the restoration of all. With regard, however, to particular passages of Scripture like Romans xi. 32, which are definitely universalistic, not only in regard to God's intention of salvation, but also in regard to the result

of it, our first principle as to the use of Scripture would have to come into play, that single texts cannot be regarded as decisive when other texts, with equal or greater clearness, state the contrary. And not only so: in fact an exact exegesis cannot find in that expression in Romans any statement as to the final lot of all individuals; for the simple reason that according to the context, that does not come within the Apostle's field of view. In other passages again, as in the much abused phrase, "God is all in all," one must be very clearly convinced of the Apokatastasis beforehand in order to find it expressed. Is not then God all in all when even the last enemy has been "brought to naught"?

Now, however, all practical considerations having been so far carefully left out of account, these too may be allowed their rights. If this doctrine of Restoration has so often been designated by those who held it an esoteric one, and in those pietistic communities, e.g. in which it was held, now and then the demand that it be kept as such was expressed in very drastic terms, the question as to the reasons for that demand is not a pressing one. In spite of all means of protection against it, they dreaded the danger of possible abuse of the doctrine, lest it might induce indifference in the matter of one's own soul, or in caring for the souls of others. On the other hand, the thought of the real possibility of souls being lost, if properly understood, does not lead to over-importunate zeal for converting, or to loveless passing of judgment, but urges us simply to deal in a thoroughly honest and earnest way with ourselves and with our neighbours; sustained in both cases by a hopeful courage which is found nowhere else, but which is inspired by trust in God who in reality does not desire that anyone should perish.

Chiliasm

We must go more thoroughly into the other general scheme of the eschatological process which bears the name of Chiliasm. It is worth while noticing at the outset the relation which it bears to Apokatastasis. Theoretically the two things are direct opposites, for Apokatastasis is governed by the idea of development, Chiliasm by the idea of an abrupt close in view of the Judgment. Still, combinations of the two have not been wanting. One who decides for Restoration as the ultimate issue, may regard the millennium as the most important period of the final developments, and thereby secure for those who in this world have become believers, or for the specially excellent among them, a preference over those who are redeemed at a late stage. Further, the fact is to be noted that Chiliasm, together with Apokatastasis, is rejected in the chief Lutheran Confession: Aug. 17 rejects "the doctrine of those who declare that before the resurrection of the dead, the godly shall come to rule the world, after the overthrow of all the godless". Yet this not only was for centuries the really "orthodox" opinion (Justin Martyr), but, transmitted by the agency of Pietism, especially that which stood under the influence of Bengel, has very largely again become so, in spite of that express prohibition of the Creed. Was the opposition of the Augsburg Confession founded perhaps merely upon disgust at a "fleshly kingdom of Christ," such as fanatics of that period desired to introduce, and to which we have a modern parallel in the Mormon State? Or is our dislike to it founded on the fact that in Irvingism, Chiliasm has consciously assumed the rôle of opponent of the Church, and that among us it still throws out fantastical excrescences, though they only appear in insipid romances? And may not the hope of a millennial kingdom be so firmly founded upon the

New Testament, that the Church for the sake of its principle of the authority of Scripture must recognize it?

The *general leading idea* of this Chiliasm is the preliminary completion of the Kingdom of God upon earth by the direct interposition of the Exalted Christ, and that a preliminary completion which still lies in the future. For the past millennium which Hengstenberg found in the History of the Church is all too clearly a feigned recognition induced by the text of a Scripture passage, while in truth it is the strongest condemnation of the idea conceivable. In that fundamental conception, one may say, all Chiliasts are at one, from the Epistle of Barnabas to Bengel in his exposition of the Apocalypse, and all Bengel's followers. In detail there are, it is true, almost as many *differences* as there are upholders of the main idea. Still we can pick out the distinctive points of Chiliasm, as it falls to be considered by us at the present day. The distinctions refer not so much to the duration of the "heavenly kingdom upon earth"—the number, 1000, being regarded as definite or simply a round number; nor yet to the date, sooner or later, of its beginning—e.g. in the year 500, 1785, 1816 (Stilling), 1836 (Bengel), or 1847; but rather are concerned with the degree of completeness accorded to this kingdom, in relation to the final "heavenly" Kingdom of God. And what is said on that point corresponds naturally in the main with what is said regarding the Second Coming of Christ. If the millennium be conceived of as essentially a final consummation, the Coming of Christ is placed at the beginning of it. Conversely, if the millennium be understood essentially as the climax of earthly development, it is made to end with the Second Coming of Christ; this phrase being understood in the strict sense, not

merely in the general sense of a specially glorious activity of the Exalted Lord.

Chiliasm of the moderate type cherishes often only a general hope of "better times," as history draws to its close (Spener). As a rule, however, it has a more definite expectation (Bengel, Martensen, etc.) of a time in which the Church will gain the victory, its flowering time. In this world at enmity with the Christ, Christianity must reveal itself as a world-conquering power: after long tribulation it celebrates its triumphs. Israel is to be converted; missions are to be crowned with a success as yet not dreamed of; all the relations of men, —politics, art, commerce,—are to be ruled by Christian ideas. For evil is to be crushed down; Christ will exercise His power from heaven together with His saints, the first-fruits of the Resurrection. But this spring, too, is to be followed by its harvest; evil will gather its forces for a last struggle, and will thus give occasion for the final victory of the Lord on His return.

Chiliasm of the pronounced type paints a much fuller picture. Here too, there are differences. The majority, in order to avoid taking away all the glory of the eternal consummation, affirm that there will be a preliminary return of Christ, who will, however, depart to heaven again, whence He will manifest His activity; for the earth is not yet glorified. It will be a time of blessed intercourse between heaven and earth, "as in the forty days after the Resurrection, or as at first in Paradise"; many say that Christ will appoint one of the House of David to be His representative upon earth. The heavenly Church and the earthly will be in more vital communion with one another than in the historical period of the Church's existence. Christianity will leaven the world. The union of priesthood with kingship will be reflected in the relation of Church and State, and thus the Kingdom

of God will appear on earth. The whole of Art and Science, the whole of social intercourse, will be at once worldly and Christian. One of the principal blessings of this period, however, is the restoration of Israel: Jerusalem will be the centre of the millennial kingdom. Then, "*pace* the Epistle to the Hebrews," the ceremonial and civil law of Moses will have its spiritual depth outwardly revealed, in the worship and organization of the Church. We live at present in the time of preaching, which brings in the still unconverted; but then will dawn the day of Liturgy, adapted to the worship of a community composed entirely of the converted. And not only is the form in which the Kingdom of God is fulfilled determined by this restoration of Israel, but its power also. There will then be no need to toil laboriously for the in-gathering of the heathen: Israel will be the great world-missionary (Auberlen). Other Chiliasts went even further than this. In the glorified Jerusalem the Church of God will be under the perpetual rule of Christ; only the world outside the boundaries of this Divine state will still await the final consummation.

In forming an opinion upon this whole fundamental type of future hope, we may in the first place point out that those who hold it have never done anything worth speaking of to invalidate the charge that it is a self-contradictory conception. Of course this charge hits the particular developments of the doctrine the more severely, in proportion as they approximate the preliminary consummation to the final one, and assume the coming of a glorified Church in a glorified Jerusalem, surrounded by a world at enmity with God. But even the intercourse of the saints made perfect in heaven with the believers upon the earth is difficult to conceive, if it means anything more than communion in faith; but if

it means no more than this in its fullest activity, what is the purpose in speaking of a millennial kingdom?

However, the adherents of this doctrine will always be ready to suspect that such questions spring from unbelief. Unjustifiable as this is, yet we will consider their point of view and test the reasons on which they lay stress. And further, in order once more to obviate all suspicion of doing them injustice, we will take up these reasons in a different order from that which our principles of method would recommend. We will leave the so-called Biblical proof to the last, and speak first of the *general reasons gathered from the nature of our faith.* The scenes of the Church's sufferings, they say, must be the scenes of its triumph. The earth which has drunk the blood of the martyrs must be the witness of their glory; and Jerusalem, which the great events in the history of salvation have made sacred, must be the place where salvation is completed. The force of this argumentation it will never be possible to make good. The certainty of God's triumph, proclaiming itself to all the world and of necessity admitted by all the world, is indeed part of our faith; but as to the how and even the where, faith has no postulates to bring forward. The above conclusion is in fact often only a concrete expression of this other thought, that if Chiliasm be not accepted, the actuality of the hope itself, or to use the favourite word in this connexion, its *Realism,* is endangered. The complete reality of the hope cannot be upheld with more conscious earnestness than has been done above. But it is quite independent of the form of expectation which contemplates a millennium. Else we would have to turn round and say that those who hold such an expectation are not in earnest as to the reality of the final consummation. Or is it that they desire something else than that with an em-

phasis that can be fully justified we assert an actual, real and, rightly understood, a realistic consummation, in which, moreover, in contradiction to any spiritualism which would dissipate it, the harmonious unity of spirit and nature is expressly recognized? Do they desire something more—which is in reality something less? Not a consummation spiritually real, extending to a real glorious manifestation of what is spiritual, but one real to the senses, naturally real? No doubt the fruitfulness of the vine will not now be so naïvely pictured as in the well-known passage of Papias; and in describing the "ruling of the nations with a rod of iron," some caution will be exercised. But is there not a more refined form of sense? Such as is expressed, for instance, in crying out for the revival of the Mosaic ceremonial in the new Jerusalem? The eternal worship in spirit and in truth will doubtless make for itself forms, of a grandeur which we have no conception of; but for that very reason, why set up once more sacrifices and altars and a liturgy belonging to a stage which we have risen beyond,—"shadows which in Christ are done away"? And still another element of the sphere of sense may seek to commend itself by the term realism. Those who receive a share in the millennial kingdom have thereby a preference in the consummation. Now the idea of degrees in glory is certainly no unchristian idea, but is well-attested in the New Testament. But may not this form of it become dangerous? And in this connexion, too, one may point out that, as a matter of fact, at least many believers in Chiliasm either, in this expectation, characterize much energetic work on behalf of the community as worthless, and themselves neglect it; or on the other hand press in haste and excitement towards the glorious end —e.g. in regard to missions, they have shown them-

selves as often sceptical critics, as rash and restless enthusiasts. And if other Chiliasts have kept themselves from either extreme, we may suppose that with them the simple Christian hope is stronger than this special expectation.

Those believers in the millennium, however, on whom no suspicion can be cast, as a rule maintain all the more earnestly that this belief is *in accordance with Scripture.* Now one generally finds common ground with them in the position that the Old Testament promises, and in the first place those as to the future of Israel, can only be interpreted in the light of their New Testament fulfilment. If they were to be taken quite literally, we would have to expect that when Israel is restored to the Holy Land, as the prophets evidently expected it to be, there will be a return also of the priestly family of Zadok, of the sin-offering, of the separation of the priesthood from the laity; nay, that there will be a restoration of the Moabites and Philistines and of the whole historical situation. If then we are thus forced to turn to the New Testament, Romans XI. does indeed clearly speak of the acceptance of the Gospel by Israel as a whole, in contrast to the sporadic conversions in the time of the Apostles; as also of the immense importance which this conversion of the ancient People of the Covenant will have for the other peoples—an importance no less than this, that with it all history will come to an end and the resurrection of the dead will take place. But of an ingathering of Israel to the Holy Land, of a restoration of the throne of David, of a hegemony of the restored people among the nations of the world, above all of a glorified re-establishment of the cultus in Jerusalem, the text says not a word. Who could really show that in the sphere of thought of a Paul there was any room whatever for such an idea? But apart from this hope for

Israel, which of course usually forms one of the main points of Chiliasm, it is believed that the general *idea of a preliminary consummation* upon earth is attested in the New Testament, and indeed in the words of the Lord Himself. Are not the meek to inherit the earth (Matt. v. 5)? Does He not speak of a recompense in the resurrection of the just (Luke xiv. 14), and of eating and drinking anew in the kingdom of God? No doubt He does; but does all that contain the slightest hint of a preliminary consummation on earth, as distinguished from the perfected kingdom itself? The accompanying parallel beatitudes simply set alongside of this inheritance of the earth the possession of the Kingdom of God, without drawing any distinction whatever. More accurately, the earth is no doubt spoken of, but not a preliminary inheritance of it. The promised Kingdom is to be upon the new, glorified earth, which is conjoined with the new heaven. Accordingly the return intimates the beginning of the final consummation. Jesus nowhere speaks of a twofold return, at the millennium and at the final consummation; nor does He ever associate the one return with a preliminary period of glory upon the earth. And His words about sitting at meat, about eating and drinking, are, as we have often said already, protests, which we must not disregard, against any attempt to spiritualize our hope away; but they can never be used as arguments for a half earthly, half heavenly preliminary consummation. How otherwise could the Lord have spoken of these things than as He has done? But if He had had the millennium in mind, He must have spoken differently of it. As a matter of fact, no one would deny this, were it not that the passage, Revelation xx. 1 ff., speaks of a Kingdom of a thousand years. Because of that other texts in the same sense were sought. But that pas-

sage, as is shown by the almost innumerable different interpretations which have been given of it, is by no means so clear in itself as the fundamental expressions of the Christian hope; nay more, it very easily comes into conflict with them. The consideration especially that elsewhere only *one* return, the return to the last judgment, is spoken of, led Bengel himself to suppose, contrary to the text, that the millennium would begin without a return. In these circumstances it is important to note that, apart from the New Testament, the millennium figures in one portion of the Jewish Apocalypses; and there it is evidently a compromise between the idea of a remote world beyond the grave and the definite Messianic expectation. In Christianity, however, there is no need for any such compromise. With equal simplicity and certainty, the Lord testifies to the actual perfecting of the Kingdom which in Him has come. Finally, many have found the idea of a preliminary consummation stated by Paul in 1 Corinthians xv. 26 ff. But, granted that an extended period of Christ's rule between His return and the end is there spoken of, there is yet no hint that that implies a period of exceptional glory for the Church on earth, such as the Chiliasts imagine. Further, it must strike us as curious that in other contexts which almost necessarily led to this idea, Paul says absolutely nothing about it; e.g. in 1 Thessalonians iv. 16 ff.

Up till this point we have spoken of Chiliasm only in the distinctively eschatological sense. We must add that many use the word in a much more general significance, applying it to that vigorous growth of the Kingdom of God under the conditions of earthly existence, which is occasioned by the extraordinary exertion of the powers of all true Christians, especially in the social sphere. We shall be able, however, to decide whether there is a

germ of truth in this idea, only if we now proceed to give a connected treatment of the

Particular Expressions in a Positive Sense of the Hope for the Future,

so far as on the basis of our guiding principles we are able to make any statements regarding it.

The two groups of questions which arise out of the subject-matter itself have been already mentioned. There fall to be treated of: THE FATE OF THE INDIVIDUAL AFTER HIS DEPARTURE FROM THIS LIFE UNTIL THE UNIVERSAL CONSUMMATION, and this consummation itself. But we cannot assume without more ado that we are justified in separating the two things. In any case, the importance attached to the two questions and their relation to one another has varied greatly. At one time the general consummation was almost everything: the perfecting of the individual was included in that. The delay of Christ's return of necessity raised the independent question as to the lot of the individual in the interval. And indeed this question might almost occupy the whole field of view to the exclusion of the universal consummation, as was the case in the teaching of our older theologians with regard to judgment at the moment of death. A kind of reconciliation of the two interests is presented by speculations, sometimes carried into much detail, as to an intermediate state, or even as to a continuous resurrection; as also when minute attention was bestowed upon the question of the return and the judgment, in circles devoted to Bible-study. They could not but observe how much greater was the stress laid upon the latter doctrines in the early Christian expectation than in the orthodox theology. From such circles, then, the theology of the Church has gladly adopted and worked out combinations of the kind. On

the other hand, so far as the thought of the unseen world occupies the general consciousness of the community, it appears almost solely in its individualistic form, and, it must be admitted, is often the centre of wantonly exuberant fancy without any depth of earnestness. "Letters from Hell" and "Letters from Heaven," the former often more dignified and in better taste than the latter, dwell on the idea that resurrection and judgment are symbols for the change which takes place at death, that heaven and hell open as we close our eyes. Further, hell is pictured as the scene of life's consequences: the illusive realities of earthly existence have come to an end. The torment consists in the discovery that what the soul has set its affections on is an illusion, from which it can no longer derive even the illusive satisfaction which at least it was able to obtain in this life. Often there is cast over this sad picture the hopeful shimmer of an attenuated doctrine of Restoration. A strong impression of the awful mystery of "death" this species of literature is not able to create; such as the meditations upon death of our older theologians, or even many products of the Rationalistic period in their own way, or the combination of the two in particular characters of some great poets, have the power to do (cf. Hippel's "Lebensläufe").

It might be doubted whether the ideas as to the perfecting of the universal body and as to the future of the individual ought really to remain always associated with one another in any way, and to be reconciled somehow with one another; whether the passages of the New Testament, though doubtless the more numerous, which contemplate the perfecting of the whole, should not rather be subordinated to those which have reference to the individual. However, this would not be possible without doing injury to the main idea

which sprang directly from the nature of the Gospel, that the Kingdom of God is a unity in which alone the separate individuals can be perfected. And that is all the more evident because in the New Testament itself we find both lines of thought laid down already. In Phil. I. 21, e.g. Paul speaks unmistakably of his hope of being with the Lord previous to the return and the general consummation; and in the same Epistle, III. 21, he expressly lays emphasis upon the significance of that event universally for all Christians, himself included. No doubt such expressions uttered from different points of view, yet mingling so closely with one another, caused less difficulty so long as the end was conceived to be so near at hand. But in principle, the position from which they spring is the same as ours; for in principle, the question of the lot of the individual Christian who dies before the final consummation is set in relation to this final consummation. Our division of what has to be said regarding the eschatological process continues to be justified, although the answer which it will be permissible for us to give to the questions which are thereby raised must keep within very modest limits.

There can be no question, since the Kingdom of God, according to the fundamental idea of it which we have just repeated, is a unity, that its perfection as a whole is full of significance for the perfecting of the individual members of it; that first through it comes their own perfecting in the full sense which we have previously described. With regard now to the state of the INDIVIDUAL between his departure from this life and the final universal consummation, we must be strictly on our guard, remembering our principles of method, that we do not confuse opinions as to its significance and the corresponding inmost content with opinions as

to its form. Only on the basis of the significance of this state can we speak of its form, if at all. In order to characterize the significance clearly, however, it is well to draw a distinction between the phrases intermediate state and transition state which are often used indefinitely; speaking of *intermediate state* when no change of importance is regarded as occurring there in the position with regard to salvation, and of *transition state* when such change does occur, when there is ascribed to this state the significance of an actual stage in the passage to the goal indicated.

This distinction being presupposed, we must assume the existence of an *intermediate state* in two respects. First, for the believers who "have fallen asleep in the Lord". Their position as regards the Divine salvation in Christ is decided: they have accepted it in faith and have kept the faith. That does not indeed exclude the possibility that this life of theirs, which in quality has reached its goal, may be developed under new conditions of existence. But the widespread assumption that by God's appointment they must grow to still greater maturity in order to stand in the Judgment, is devoid of all foundation in the nature of the Gospel. It undervalues justification and assurance of salvation in the evangelical sense; it brings the ethical character of our religion into force at the wrong place; and as a result, mars the joy of our outlook towards eternity. No such speculation, though it may give itself an air of special piety, can stand before the simple sublimity of Paul's assurance of being at the moment of his departure with Christ, of being present with the Lord. The goal is arrived at; the crown is ready. The phrase intermediate state has thus no other significance whatever than to represent the value of the universal consummation for the individual, and not to make his entrance

into bliss and glory uncertain with petty buts and whens. In the life of a community in which both ideas are eagerly cherished, one can easily convince oneself that the distinction is by no means without moment. Think, too, how very different the tone of the New Testament Epistles would necessarily have been otherwise! Thorough earnestness at the right time and place, but no cutting down of the certainty of Justification, must be our watchword. Further, the ideas as to this growth to full maturity are for the most part not clear in themselves. How should period of time heaped upon period, even æon upon æon, bring about what in its inmost essence is independent of time! Only the thorough discussion of this question, exhibiting as it does one aspect of the great doctrine of "Faith and Works," belongs to Ethics. In this connexion, however, a question may well be touched upon which often moves Christian hearts so deeply, when they are pained by the departure of those who are early called away. Lively faith in the inexhaustible glory of the perfected Kingdom will be able to maintain itself just through the inexhaustible wealth of individual forms, and therefore also in face of the distinction between those who are made perfect at early and at late stages of their career; certain though it is that all definite knowledge of the matter is withheld from us.

Looking at the question as a whole, we would also require logically to speak of an intermediate state in regard to those who in this life have finally decided against salvation, who have hardened themselves in unbelief. For in their case certainly, if they are thought of as such, change is precluded; their state cannot therefore be properly called a state of transition. Then Luke xvi. may be cited here, if, as is most probable, Jesus here connects the expression of His ideas as to

the final doom of the wicked with a conception as to the state after death already present in the minds of His hearers. Only it must be remembered not only that on all such points we must be very specially on our guard against turning separate passages of Scripture into dogmas, but that the more precise definition of the idea which here occupies us is dependent upon the question not yet discussed, whether the lot of the ungodly is to be conceived of as eternal torment or as annihilation.

It is more accurate to use the phrase *transition state* in regard to those who have not in their life on earth had the opportunity of gaining personal faith in God's love in Christ, and who, we must assume, will have such opportunity granted them in the other world; if we are not to come into direct contradiction with the belief in the universality of God's counsel of salvation (cf. pp. 795 ff.). This applies to those who are outside the Christian community, the Old Testament believers and the people before and after Christ to whom the Gospel has not come; and likewise to those who outwardly may have belonged to the Christian world, but for whom the hour of possible decision has never struck, —such as children, and those who fall short by reason of their endowment, their education, or the circumstances of their lives. In regard to the first class, there are express texts of Scripture, such as John VIII. 56 f. and 1 Peter III. 19, which easily admit of generalization; nay, which, in the light of the fundamental ideas of our religion, must be generalized. This is also logically true in regard to the second group. Fear of the abuse of such an idea cannot be seriously entertained: that is possible in regard to every truth revealed for our salvation. The awful earnestness of such a text as Hebrews IX. 28 is most surely preserved, when such conclusions,

which are foreign to the context, are not unjustifiably founded on it.

As regards the offer of salvation in another world, we can, as a matter of course, consider only the offer of the definite Christian salvation, the opportunity of assenting to the demand for faith in God's love in Christ; for that is the fundamental presupposition of participation in the blessing of perfect salvation. And yet in Zwingli's view of the admission even of pious non-Christians into the Christian heaven, there was an element of truth which is indicated in the New Testament itself. So thoroughly ethical is our religion that in Matthew xxv. Jesus awards a place at the right hand of the Judge, the gift of eternal life, for the unconscious ministry of love to the least of His brethren; as does Paul in Romans II. to those who, by continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and immortality. On the other hand the same declarations, and with special clearness Matthew XI. 23, seem to imply the possibility that conscious rebellion against such good as was attainable in an incomplete stage of knowledge, may finally exclude from the opportunity of full salvation. But here we feel too distinctly that we are at the limit of our Christian knowledge, to be able to give more definite form to these surmises. And perhaps it is well to make clear only that if and so far as there is conversion beyond the confines of this earthly life, it cannot be represented as being of necessity more easily accomplished than on earth. For obviously that would be to give up the ethical nature of our Faith, apart altogether from the fact that it would be an excursion into the uncharted sea of fancy.

This objection affects all the descriptions whatever of the nature of this state between the death of the individual and the end of the world, those of the inter-

mediate and transition states included, which go beyond indicating its significance and its nature. Our interest in oracular sayings such as that it is a non-spatial and non-temporal state has been entirely dispelled by our brief consideration of the problem of Time (pp. 506 ff., 866 ff.). So also our interest in the figure of a sleep of the soul, which, as treated by a poet, may at times exercise a strong attraction upon us. Taken seriously, it says more than in accordance with what was stated above we can admit; unless, as in a well-known saying of Luther, it only gives concrete expression to the thought that in waiting for the final consummation, there is no painful sense of deferred bliss for those who are ever with the Lord, and that in this certainty they have complete consolation (1 Thess. IV. 13 ff.). In particular, the idea of a body in the intermediate state is worthless from a religious point of view. If it is meant to express that the spirits hidden in God can never lack an organ and symbol of their activity corresponding to the stage of their existence, it is an unnecessary phrase for what is self-evident. If it is meant to express more, it is not free from danger; for it burdens our faith with doubtful speculations, and often, too, with chimeras of a particularly baseless character—"Nerve-spirit," "Spirit-stuff," and such like. If one considers how often in the past, and always in vain, single texts of Scripture like 2 Corinthians v. 2 have been forced to furnish a conclusion for or against such pet opinions, one will see the necessity of again calling to mind the guiding principles of Scripture proof. In particular, in reference to the dogmatic use of what is said in regard to the under-world must we remember the warning against direct application of the Old Testament: on this point, owing to Luther's twofold use of the word "Hell," this use of the Old Testament is still

in lay circles fraught with quite special danger. The question whether and how far the very ancient ideas as to the re-incarnation and pre-existence of souls admit of any treatment in this connexion such as would be in harmony with the nature of our faith, lies quite beyond the scope of our task.

All the separate questions which for Christian faith still fall to be considered in connexion with the CONSUMMATION OF ALL THINGS, meet in the idea of the *Second Coming*. The more this idea has suffered from too hasty running after details, the more advisable it is to state its true intrinsic meaning in simple but definite terms at the outset. It is just this: the assured hope of a conclusive and undeniable Revelation of Jesus; the New Testament using the two expressions Return —properly advent, but in relation to the historical Coming a Return,— and Revelation as interchangeable ideas. Understood in this sense, this element of the Christian hope is included in faith in Christ as God's complete self-revelation. In the Christology it was shown why and how Christian faith was from the first faith in Christ, has ever since continued to be so, and will always so continue. From that we merely draw here the final consequence. At no period of history is this faith in every sense complete. In individual believers and in the Church of the faithful it remains at least in so far incomplete, as the opposition of the still unbelieving world gives rise to temptation which has always to be overcome anew, and is often a serious danger. The latest doubt, as arising from the latest opposition, will be silenced. Whoever accepts Matthew XI. 27 finds Matthew XXVI. 64 included as respects its profoundest sense, that which is totally independent of particular interpretations. It is impossible to be con-

vinced that the knowledge of the Father is dependent upon the Son, without at the same time being convinced that this intimate dependence will be finally and unmistakably manifested. Far from this last claim of Jesus being fanatical, the first would be so without the second. Let it not be forgotten, therefore, that faith has indeed an interest in that one point,—but, let us add, in that one point alone. By recognizing the clause, "from whence He shall return," as in the strict sense one aspect, a logical consequence, of the fundamental confession of Jesus as the Lord, we have also recognized the intrinsic limitation of this confession. It is contained in the idea of clear, universally recognized revelation. And with that, every attempt to depict the second coming in detail is precluded. Else we immediately find ourselves asserting less than faith means. For the second coming is not an event within the present course of world-history, but it is its close, actually the end of "this world," as the New Testament always represents it to be. People have often been led astray by the fact that the New Testament could not, as a matter of course, speak of this end in other terms than those taken from the history of this earth, as the story was moulded, moreover, by contemporary conceptions of the world; and that for the reason which we have repeatedly mentioned, it makes the freest use of them. But through all the pictures and colours which it employs, there can be no doubt about the main point: the second coming is an actual, unmistakable, unambiguous revelation for believers and unbelievers. That is the sense of the sublime figure of the lightning (Luke XVII. 24): in order to be such a revelation, it must be an actual end and an actual new beginning.

Having thus set the main point free from all details we may now turn to consider these with all possible

freedom. Let us take first the *expectation of the near approach* of the Parousia. The manifold changes in the Church's conception may be passed over; the reasons for which the date of it was moved further into the future; how reasons for this postponement were then sought for; and what events have from time to time awakened the old belief again. Even in the New Testament we have to do only with the position taken by Jesus. For that the early Christians, with here and there differences of conception in detail, lived in the near expectation of their Lord, is clearly attested by statements in their writings; and the more casual some of these expressions are, the more clearly do they attest the fact. Amongst those who devote themselves with eagerness to the personal reading of the Bible, the confession may be heard with surprise: "Should I have read my New Testament so carelessly as not to have noticed that?" "Theologians," at the same time, go on to set it down as a sign of unbelief that one should ascribe to a Paul the expectation of being alive at the Lord's return. For it must be admitted he expresses himself in various ways, according to the course which his life ran. He thinks of his departure before the Parousia (Phil. I. 21; 2 Cor. V. 1 ff.), while elsewhere he reckons himself among those still alive when the Lord comes (1 Cor. XV. 51; 1 Thess. IV. 13 ff.). We have expressly stated the significance of the first class of expressions; but they contain no hint that Paul assumed that long periods of time would intervene between his day and the coming of the Lord. Nor are such long periods as history has shown to have actually occurred assumed in 2 Peter III. 8, or in the Gospel of John; though there the delay setting in manifestly occupies the thoughts in a different way than in the days of Paul. The sayings of Jesus, as they are handed down to us by tradition, are at the

present time, where the principles of historical investigation are recognized at all, almost universally understood in the sense that He Himself, like the early Christians, expected His return almost immediately, at any rate within the life of that generation, and that this expectation in the Church owed its origin directly to Him. How far this opinion is forced upon us by historical facts is perhaps not so unquestionable as is generally assumed. Recollection of the Christology set forth above places us in the proper frame of mind for examining the subject without prejudice. Faith in the Lord is not diminished even if the ignorance which He Himself professed in such express terms (Mark XIII. 32) were really a near expectation; if the certainty of the fact, which necessarily sprang from the depth of His consciousness of Sonship, became for Him an expectation that it would take place soon. Premising that, we may point out that the decided opinion that that really was the case, lays stress upon one side of the recorded sayings to the neglect of the other. Some of the parables, for instance, and of those on whose genuineness criticism throws no suspicion, occasion difficulties for the opinion in question. Are the parables of the mustard seed and especially of the leaven, and Mark IV. to be regarded as referring only to the generation then living? And then the investigation of sayings of the most varied kinds regarding the future, which formerly was carried much more into detail than is now the case, comes to have significance anew in its whole scope. If these sayings are in the first instance placed side by side without attempting to trace any connexion between them, four groups cannot but be recognized: immediate return (e.g. Matt. XVI. 27 f.), resurrection on the third day (e.g. XVI. 21), continued personal influence in the Church (XVIII. 20), and glorification through the extension of

His Kingdom is also suggested in a general way in many passages, especially when one remembers the assertion of the permanence of His words, the commission and promise addressed to His disciples. Now as is well known, the doctrine of former days brought these different classes of sayings into a definite order; this namely,—resurrection, triumph of the cause and spiritual presence of the Lord in it, return after thousands of years. But that this scheme is irreconcilable with the text of the sources, is sufficiently proved by Matthew XXIV. 29 alone. For no "prophetic perspective" can turn thousands of years into "immediately," nor can any art of language make "immediately" mean "sometime soon," though it would not make any difference if it could. The form in which the tradition has come down, therefore, led naturally to the attempt to reduce the four classes of ideas which we have mentioned to one, to see if it were not possible that Jesus had spoken only of resurrection, or only of a second coming and so on. But this attempt, in whatever of the possible directions it was made, having led to the most violent treatment of the texts, the question deserves consideration whether the influence of the Church, basing itself upon eschatological ideas adopted from tradition, as well as upon its own experiences, has not proved to be greater in this matter than anywhere else; whether therefore the near expectation of the Parousia was so expressly stated by Jesus Himself as certain of the sayings ascribed to Him by tradition imply; or whether it is not rather the case that His expression, naturally prophetic, of the certainty of triumph which glowed within Him, of a triumph, too, which doubtless was to begin immediately, has taken in tradition the form in which we now know it.

However that may be, and whatever decision one may

come to—and it was our starting-point that undoubtedly a difference of opinion is possible on this matter without injury to faith—the further question arises, whether it is possible for us of the present day, who in God's providence have been taught by the course of events that the second coming has not taken place within the short period in which the early Church expected it, to form any judgment whatever on the future consummation in this regard; and along with that the other question, what possible significance the idea of its near approach may still have for us. To some extent, attention to what the New Testament says as to the *conditions prior to the second coming*, gives an answer to these questions. In Matthew xxiv. 32, Jesus appeals for attention to be given to these signs. But the warning not to open the heart to any illusions is even stronger. That alone should have restrained us from making any such detailed interpretations of the Apocalypse as we have already rejected on other grounds. We are limited to a few pregnant hints in the sayings of Jesus, which are all the more worthy of attention when they occur in contexts which are not solely of an eschatological nature.

In the main, it is a question of two things,—*the position of the Gospel in the world, and the condition of the Church before the second coming.* Here the parables of the grain of mustard seed and of the leaven, as also those of the tares among the wheat and of the ten virgins, are decisive. The good seed grows, but so do the tares; the separation must not take place prematurely: well-meaning opinion tends to such untimely action, just in the Church which would suffer injury thereby; but to make the separation belongs to the Lord of the Harvest. This parable is one of the most important evidences for the truth which occupied our special attention when

dealing with the fundamental idea, namely for the higher unity of development and of conclusion, and in such wise that the necessity of the conclusion just as a complete break is strongly emphasized. But that parable is equally important for our particular question at present. In all simplicity it negatives the superficial optimistic dream that every blossom of the Kingdom of God can and must reach maturity upon earth, that there must come a cloudless evening for its history in time; nay, that this bright horizon appearing on earth at the close is what Eschatology proper amounts to. But it negatives equally the pessimistic plaint, which is so often uttered as if the warrant for it were self-evident, that the world grows worse and more godless the nearer it approaches to the end, a plaint which has not infrequently become a cloak for indolence. Definitely and unambiguously, above that hope and this despondency, rises the saying: Let both grow together until the harvest. The good grows in that the highest good is offered to ever-increasing numbers, and as it spreads more and more through the circles that have been influenced by it. But evil grows likewise, is confirmed in its antagonism to the good, and in the increase is refined and in this way becomes only the worse evil; and that both without and within the Church. Both aspects of the single truth are comprised in watchwords which have special expression given to them. On the one hand, the completion of mission work and the second coming are conjoined (Matt. xxiv. 14). This is significant enough, whether these words are ascribed to the Lord Himself, or to the Church of the first period which reproduced His thought. On the other hand, in the ever-memorable parable of the ten Virgins, indifference, weariness in waiting for the Bridegroom, is depicted. Or it is said that in many, love will wax cold, because

iniquity shall abound (Matt. xxiv. 12). Thus the growth of evil in the Church is combined with that which is antagonistic to the Church. She is persecuted, hated. Her greatest danger, however, is not that, but that she herself should give entrance to the spirit of her opponents, which cannot therefore be always one which is outwardly so easily to be distinguished as antichristian, but exercises a secret charm, "to seduce, if possible, even the elect". In short, the prospect is held out that Christianity will grow worldly; and not only is this described in certain particulars in the letters to the Churches in the Apocalypse, but in its deepest nature it is indicated already in this parable of the Lord Himself.

In this connexion the figure of the *Antichrist* has its place. The influence of older traditions is here especially unmistakable, and a fusion of the New Testament passages into a complete and finished picture is impossible. The name, the number, the content, the origin, are differently given. The word Antichrist is used only in 1 John ii. 18; iv. 3; while in Matthew xxiv. the term is false Christs. Paul in 2 Thessalonians ii. speaks of "him who letteth" and the man of sin, and the Apocalypse speaks of the "Beast". The plural is used in Matthew; Paul uses the singular, as does also the Book of Revelation; while the First Epistle of John very clearly speaks both in the singular and in the plural. Finally, the traits of the figure are different in nature, or are at least differently emphasized,—worldly power, false prophecy, lying spirit, self-deification. And where is the origin to be sought? Without the Church or within it; and in the latter case, in Judaism or in Heathenism? But even if a conscientious exposition of Scripture can leave no doubt on these points of difference, the multiplicity becomes an illustration of the ground-idea of the growth of evil, and that not in a form

rendered innocuous for the elect by its palpable clearness, but complicated and therefore insidious and seductive.

Whether these statements regarding the "signs" of the second coming can influence our attitude to the expectation of its proximity, is at once clear. They lead to the same refusal to enter upon any outward calculation, which resulted in what precedes from other more general considerations. In particular, the conjunction with the spread of the Gospel is no ground for such calculation; for by our providential education through the events of history, we have been taught clearly enough among other things that it is not a fulfilment of the Divine will that the peoples of the earth should merely be outwardly brought into touch with the Gospel; but that rather in the region which we can immediately scan, evangelization has become the starting-point of quite new, unexpected developments. Why should similar things, though of course very different in detail, be denied to the Christianized masses of India and of China, or even in their own way to the tribes of Africa? Nay, far from drawing to its close, the history of the Christian world itself seems rather to be only at its beginning. For who would venture to affirm that the fundamental ideas of the Gospel have yet had the opportunity to show what they are capable of, amid the entirely altered conditions and problems of our modern life? The more lively our faith is, the more will it find itself here face to face with boundless possibilities. To set a limit to the wonders of God's guidance of world-history is contrary to Christian humility. It is likewise contrary to love. The Christian Church should therefore make an advance, with far more frankness than is yet very often the case, toward every earnest endeavour to carry out the principles of the Gospel under earthly conditions.

Much hesitancy, particularly with regard to the great social problems, bespeaks a want of the love which springs from faith. From all external optimism the Church is at the same time preserved by her principles: the Kingdom of God will never be perfected on this earth. But faith in the eternal consummation through the full revelation of Jesus Christ should be the greatest stimulus to the utmost exertion of all one's powers in the present for the introduction of a better future on earth. Here, however, we have again reached the point at which the further exposition falls to Ethics, if Dogmatics and Ethics are to receive special treatment.

Thus we return to the starting-point. The hope of the return of the Lord, in the sense indicated, forms part of the lively hope of the Christian; and the neglect of it is a sign of faith that is becoming faint. At each period it will assume different forms: its inmost content remains always the same, and this is true also of its ground and its power. Without this faith modern life with its special richness is specially poor. And every individual has in the certainty, together with the uncertainty, as to his departure from the earth, a constant stimulus to be true and watchful during the brief allotted span (Matt. XXIV.; Luke XIII.).

The special questions connected with Eschatology, in other words what we are able to say regarding the eschatological process, are now in the main exhausted. For regarding the *Judgment of the world* we have already said what was necessary and possible from the standpoint of the fundamental ideas of the Gospel. We have also dealt with its significance for those who have already been received into fellowship with God. Any other matter that may still be missed, lies entirely beyond the scope of Dogmatics. Pious reflection will be quite at

liberty to draw its conclusions from the fact that individuals and the whole body belong together, as do the "sons of God" and the "Kingdom of God,"—e.g. as to the continued influence of one's own life and the lives of others, or again as to the interest felt by those who have already passed away in earthly history, in the sense, say, of Hebrews XII. 1. May there also be a conclusion as to the interest cherished by the faithful on earth in the departed? As regards this aspect of the matter, those who are thoroughly convinced of the reality of the other world have with good reason not infrequently uttered a warning calling for special reserve, particularly in reference to the question of intercession for the dead: the intercession of the "fellow-workers with God" has its sphere in the world which is accessible to our knowledge, and keeps within its bounds.

Only two points deserve still to be specially mentioned, and one of them is capable at least to some extent of more exact treatment. With the second coming is conjoined the *Resurrection of the Dead.* Naturally the difficulty which we have already frequently dealt with, regarding the relation between the perfecting of the individual and of the whole, is here especially prominent. For certainly those who have fallen asleep in Christ do not exist merely as shades; yet for them also the great conclusion of the Kingdom will not be without significance. Therefore we find already in the New Testament the different lines of thought which were previously indicated,—resurrection at the coming of the Lord (I. Cor. XV.), and the "house in the heavens," if we die beforehand (2 Cor. v. 7 ff.). Here, however, we can say nothing additional on the matter or more exact than was formerly stated. Nor can we add anything regarding the nature of the per-

fected, new, "spiritual" body, beyond what was formerly said regarding the relation of Spirit and Nature in the final consummation. Paul in any case lays the emphasis upon the newness of the incorruptible, powerful, glorious, spiritual body: God gives it as it pleases Him(1 Cor. xv. 38). At the same time he assumes a connexion with the poor, weak, corruptible body which is sown in the earth, and compares it with seed-corn and what is raised in harvest. For us it will be best to content ourselves with the identity of the individual form, or whatever word may be chosen to express the thought that the glorified spirit being individual, its organ and symbol, the new body, must be so also. The question exactly corresponds to that which was treated in connexion with the Resurrection of Jesus. As in that case, the answer here is not an answer of faith founded on Revelation, but is an answer of unrestricted thought, determined in different directions as on such points it necessarily is by general principles of knowledge. A more direct relation between the old and the new bodies, or more cautiously expressed, between the ultimate bases of the present and the perfected conditions of existence, may in the abstract be recognized as conceivable; but we immediately come upon the ultimate questions of knowledge itself. Hence this thought is indisputable only when, as by Paul, it is limited to the expression "being changed" (Phil. III. 21), without any attempt being made to give an explanatory description of it.

The question as to the resurrection of all, touches the life of faith more closely, in so far as it leads to the other question as to the *ultimate fate of the godless.* Not as if we had still to discuss here whether there may be any who are excluded from the completed Kingdom. We had to assume that there might be,

when we rejected the doctrine of Apokatastasis. But whether are we to regard them as consigned to eternal torment, or to annihilation? Even in Mark IX. 43 ff. it may be doubted whether fire and worm are represented only as "tormenting the bodies of the dead, or as finally destroying them". But in any case, even if one adopts the former view, it should not be disputed that other expressions point the other way. Not only does Paul use the word resurrection only of the raising of the believers with Christ, though again other passages in John certainly speak of a general resurrection: more important is the emphatic use of the words "death" and "life" by Paul, and the fact that he says of death, that as the last enemy it will be destroyed, that God may be all in all. So that here at the end we are required once more to bring the principles of our use of Scripture seriously to bear, founded as we showed them to be upon the nature of the revelation of God. And on which side does our faith in its inmost character, as based upon that revelation and taking its norm from it, cast its weight? Is God all in all, to use the words we have just quoted, if there are some in eternal torment? Many say that He is so, showing Himself to be holy in their torment. But is that our God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ? The holiness of His love we have most emphatically upheld; nowhere have we advocated the lenient overlooking of sin. But is not the holiness of His love perfectly vindicated, when those who consciously of their own will reject it, are excluded from the Kingdom of God in which God is all in all? Objections such as that the possibility of dying is contrary to the nature of the soul, carry no conviction with them: they are metaphysical propositions which cannot be proved. The decisive reason for faith, however, the God who has revealed Himself

to us, points in the other direction. Nor have the practical difficulties any force. If one be not shaken by the thought that by his own fault he may be lost, he will not be shaken by the fear of eternal torment, or at any rate there would be no such shaking as leads to faith; it would be no source of "godly sorrow". Then, too, in real anxiety for one's own soul (Phil. III. 11), the consolation will spring up that, by considering as one element the historical context of a saying of the Lord, one takes nothing away from the earnestness of it in its bearing on eternity. He uses the most awful expression known to His hearers (Isa. LXVI. 24); He intensifies it by applying it to His Kingdom, but in doing so teaches also how it is suited for His Kingdom.

Considering all that had to be treated in this section, we find at the close that it is incumbent on us, in a work on Protestant Dogmatics, to repeat the affirmation in unqualified terms, that in the last resort Eschatology in its whole scope is contained in the Apostle's hymn of thanksgiving in Romans VIII. 31 ff.

Here under Eschatology, where we have been speaking of the hope contained in our faith, is probably the proper place for a closing word regarding our faith in GOD THE FATHER REALIZED THROUGH CHRIST, BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Our early Protestant theologians discussed the doctrine of God as the Three in One at the beginning of their system. But since Schleiermacher's time the doctrine of the Trinity has frequently found its place at the end of Dogmatics. He himself placed it in that position under the heading "Appendix," and gave as his reasons for so doing that one could not properly speak of the Father, the Son and the Spirit, until what Christian faith had to say regarding the Son and the

Spirit had been expounded; and, further, that we should exclude any over-estimation of this doctrine in its definite traditional form as containing articulated, objective conclusions regarding the inner economy of the Divine life. Many have repeated the first-mentioned reason who do not recognize the second, and who do not on that account approve of the description of the doctrine as an Appendix; although having regard to the limits of our knowledge, which on this point are particularly evident, they do find such a position for it appropriate. But then this latter consideration prompts us very strongly to include the doctrine in the Eschatology, and in dealing with the doctrine of the Consummation, to discuss also the removal of the limits of our knowledge of God as part of our Christian hope. Of course there are objections to this too. The exposition of this side of our hope is burdened by the recollection of our attempts to fathom this mystery under our present imperfect conditions, which on this point have been often particularly unsatisfactory, For many, the anxiety lest, by treating of this doctrine only under Eschatology, we should, perhaps without good reason, seem to admit that it has no essential significance for our present life, will have more weight. On the other hand, however, the position which the doctrine occupied in the systems of our older theologians cannot again be generally adopted, however much and with whatever justification the necessity of a doctrine of God which really has its source in Revelation, may be insisted upon. For it creates always the impression of a *tour de force* when we discourse of the Triune God, before we have made clear in Christology and the doctrine of the Spirit, on what grounds this designation is founded. All things considered, we prefer to place it under Eschatology.

By doing so we determine from the start the sense and the course of this discussion. The *sense:* for the question is by no means the general one of faith in God the Father realized through Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. That faith has been described and demonstrated throughout the whole course of the exposition which is now behind us. More accurately, to avoid all misconception let us say that there is absolutely no question whether or not our Christian faith is faith in God as Father, in Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit of God and Christ. That it is so, in what sense and for what reasons it is so, is the whole aim and content of all that has been said hitherto. Now the question rather is only whether this faith is summed up most briefly, most accurately and most unobjectionably, in the confession of belief in the Triune God. And that determines the *course* to be followed in answering that question. Our judgment as to the logical validity of the traditional propositions must be strictly distinguished from the question, whether on the ground of Revelation they are to be upheld, say, as limiting conceptions, even if that judgment should turn out to be a negative one.

The best basis for this judgment is furnished by the *Western* form of the doctrine of the Trinity recognized in our Protestant Churches, which in essentials is derived from Augustine, and in the so-called Athanasian Creed has found its way into our symbols,—not only because it is thus recognized in the Protestant Churches, but also because in itself it must be regarded as the clearest, and the objections which have been raised against it are equally valid and have always been so against every other less developed form, only their application is not so clear. "We honour one only God in three Persons, and three Persons in one God, neither

confusing the Persons with one another, nor dividing the Divine Being. Whosoever will be saved must therefore believe in the Trinity, the three Persons in God." The sense of this doctrine of the Trinity, thus formulated, has been most clearly laid down by Schleiermacher in two propositions. We must set each of the three Persons on an equality with the Divine Being, and conversely. And we must set the three Persons on an equality with each other. These two propositions go inseparably together. If the second be not recognized, the first is not strictly conceived of; and the second is only true without qualification when the first is recognized. The two together alone express the whole mystery: Father, Son, and Spirit are one God; the one God is Father, Son and Spirit. Now, to begin with the second of the above propositions, it is not possible for Christian thought to conceive the three Persons as equal, for this reason if no other that in the word Son some sort of dependence upon the Father is necessarily included; still more, in the sending of the Spirit through the Father and the Son some sort of dependence of the third Person. And as a matter of fact in spite of the formula an exceptional position in some way, some sort of superiority, has always been unwittingly ascribed to the Father. In the long history of the dogma the first of these propositions has been the more fully discussed, and all possible methods of making it clear were early exhausted. Each of the three Persons must be thought of as equal to the Divine Being, and the Divine Being as equal to each of the three Persons. We are only able, however, to think of the Divine Being either as greater than any of the three Persons, so that only these together make up that Being,—in which case each Person is not equal to the Divine Being; or as smaller, so that each alone contains the Being but has something

over and above,—in which case the Divine Being is not equal to the three Persons. In other words, we have no other means of making clear the relation of the Divine Being to the three Divine Persons than the relation of the general idea to the particular objects included in it. According then as one sees the true Being in the general or in the particular, or, as the Mediaeval thinkers expressed it, is a "Realist" or a "Nominalist," in applying this to the formula of the Trinity one limits either the three individual Persons or the common Divine Being, the side of the three or else of the one. The result is that one asserts really three elements, aspects, or modes of being of the one Godhead, without being able to speak in real earnest of three Persons. Or one ends by asserting the existence of really three Divine Persons, without being able to make the Unity clear. For of course the assurance that the word Person does not here properly mean a person, a personal subject, or the preference shown for the word Threefoldness, is just as intelligible and as justifiable in its aim of preserving Monotheism, as it is manifestly without effect, provided that it is to be asserted that the dogma is one which is in this way conceivable for us. On the other hand, the same holds true of the assurance that the distinctness of Father, Son, and Spirit may be unreservedly asserted, because their unity is for faith a matter of course. Besides, it will never be possible to forget the objection of remote antiquity, that in the formula of the Trinity the opposite relation is maintained to that which appears in Christology: in the latter we have two essences (Natures) in one Person; in the former three Persons in one essence.

If therefore the one scheme which offers itself to our thought, this relation of the general idea to the particular objects comprehended under it, furnish no

means of making the formula conceivable to us, but rather serves to show its inconceivability, there is to begin with no hope that analogies which ultimately rest upon that fundamental relation, will furnish any better help. Of such analogies two have been employed since the oldest times of Christian speculation, that of human self-consciousness and that of the relationship of love. Both of them, which were expounded by Augustine with a sublimity which those who bring them forward anew do not attain to, lead to the same opposite result. On the one hand the three Persons become mere elements of the Divine Being. That is the case when, in the analysis of our self-consciousness, a three-fold relationship is supposed to be found as the basis, and that is taken as a symbol of the inner economy of the Divine life; from Augustine's distinction of Memory, Intellect, and Will, i.e. the content of consciousness, consciousness itself, and the relation of the two in self-consciousness, to Dorner's construction which founds upon Hegel's "being in itself, being for itself, and being in and for itself". Or on the other hand, the unity of the Divine Being is lost in the emphasis laid upon the Persons. That is the case when, meditating upon the experience of love, one supposes that the loving subject, the beloved object, and the love of each for the other, may be distinguished, and that in this again a symbol may be found of the intimate Divine life of Love. For no one from Augustine down to Liebner has been able to show how far this mutual love is itself a separate person; while lover and beloved possess for the purpose contemplated only too much independent personality.

These two similes may also serve to remind us that in the traditional dogma of the Trinity, satisfaction is sought for two different interests; that of Christian faith on the one hand, for which, through the "Son and

the Spirit," the question is raised regarding their relation to the Father, and on the other hand, the interest of a speculation which does indeed connect itself with Christian interests, but in itself serves interests of a more general kind, a speculation regarding God's Personality and God's relation to the world, as it was expressed in the Logos-idea of the early Church, and was then associated with the idea of the Son. Clearly the construction which founds on self-consciousness, belongs rather to the latter circle of ideas; the other, which founds on the idea of love, to the former. It agrees with this that immediate Christian faith, though the unity of God is for it a self-evident assumption, yet without concern for this unity lays stress upon Father, Son, and Spirit, each in their special significance, while the other more general speculation logically inclines to speak simply of a threefold relation of Being in God. In the most recent period, the endeavour, which is in itself thoroughly well warranted, to emphasize the Christian idea of God in its distinctive character, has led to a determined restoration of the word Trinity, and to a justification of it from the analogies of self-consciousness and of love which we have just treated. But it cannot be said that the objections which were mentioned have been in any degree weakened. Often such attempts border very closely on Tritheism, Augustine, actually, strange as it seems, being appealed to. Others attempt to make distinctions in the work of the three Persons, which, if taken seriously, are felt by simple faith to be a direct obstacle to it; or else they clearly renew the idea of the "subordination" of the Son to the Father.

By means of all these observations derived from the history of Dogma in past and present times, we have arrived at the *source* of the idea of the Trinity in Dogmatics. In dealing with the Christian idea of

Creation, we had to speak of the Word and the Spirit of God, but not in the sense of an independent speculation. Further, it would only have been by artificial distinctions that we could have made what was there said regarding Word and Spirit, the basis of a Trinitarian idea: Word and Spirit expressed the same thing, only looked at from different standpoints. When then these ideas found their completion in the Christian doctrine of the full self-revelation of God, in His Son Jesus Christ, to the Church filled with His Spirit, Christian faith found itself face to face with a mystery for thought. Not one which subdued the thankful song of praise that the mystery hidden from Eternity had become a revealed mystery, but yet a mystery in the sense that our present knowledge finds itself at the limits of satisfactory expression for that blessed certainty. We emphasized this in the passage in which we summed up the highest utterances of faith regarding Jesus Christ. It seemed to us that it was not for faith to decide how in our present speech we should designate this faith. And then in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, this moderation in Christology is not set aside: much less in the doctrine of the Spirit than in Christology, are we invited to pry with our thoughts into the depths of the inner life of Deity, to speak of independent distinctions in the eternal Divine essence. In the position we have now reached, we must therefore also decline to make a corresponding pronouncement in the name of doctrine. For, of course, faith in the Holy Ghost, in the sense previously defined, is really an essential element in Christian saving faith; the certainty of real, personal communion with God would otherwise be endangered. Nay, without exaggeration it may be said that without this belief in the Holy Spirit, belief in Christ would be not only incomplete but liable to be misunderstood:

it might lead us into error which would endanger our faith in the One God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through Him our Father. But it is quite a different matter—and this is the question now before us—to seek to prove the significance of a third "Person," the Holy Ghost, for the inner life of Deity. For that attempt, belief in the Holy Ghost doubtless affords even less attraction than belief in Christ.

There remains then nothing but to express the abiding sense of the traditional formula; that is, to state once more what was developed in the doctrine of Christ, and that of the Holy Spirit, and what was manifestly also the main purpose of the Church, when in the forms of thought of the time it laid down its doctrine of God. *The Revelation of God which is given us in Jesus Christ, is not a chance and passing glimpse which may be superseded by another, but it is actually the full self-revelation of God, of Holy Love. And when God in Christ awakens in His Church and in each individual amongst us, faith and personal trust in this love of His, that is actually personal spiritual communion with Himself.* Thus understood, the confession serves as a buttress of Monotheism, as well as a guard against Pantheism; the former, because Son and Spirit are the Son and Spirit of the Father; the latter, because man, redeemed to real communion with God, does not lose himself in the Divine life, but enjoys this communion through the Son by the Spirit. The other purpose of the ancient doctrine of the Trinity besides the purely religious one, that namely of furnishing guidance for the understanding of the world, is also maintained as regards its religious aim. God reveals Himself in the world in a real way, becomes truly immanent in the world; but again, contrary to all Polytheism and all Pantheistic identification with the world, He enters into union with the world through Christ by the Spirit. How-

ever, these last ideas, as developed, e.g., by J. Kaftan, particularly in reference to the world of History, belong to our Christian faith only in so far as they are contained in the simplest sense of the Confession which we have stated above.

The less we detract from the dignity of this greatest truth, which has entered into no man's heart but is the gift of God (1 Cor. II. 13), by the use of pretentious language on the matter of the One and the Three, the Christian Church has all the more right to insist that its faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be not confused with the mythologies which the study of Comparative Religion furnishes in great number, in which even such similar names may be used as "Father, Son, and Advocate". In the formation of the Christian formula, a "universal human tendency to form a Trinity of Godhead" (Usener) may have exercised some influence. But actual Christian faith in God the Father, realized through Christ by the Holy Spirit, as it has now been expounded, is something thoroughly independent and unique, being faith in God's effective, spiritually real Revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ. And if one inquires as to links of connexion with the history of religion, it is undoubtedly more true to history to start here as elsewhere with the Old Testament (Harnack). Trust in the God of Israel as one with trust in His servant Moses in Exodus XIV. 31, is brought to a completion in the saying, "Ye believe in God; believe also in Me" (John XIV. 1). Though tinged by Catholic tradition and using its forms, Albrecht Dürer has yet given effective expression to this faith in the fundamental Protestant conception of it, in his picture in which he represents the Crucified One embraced in the arms of the Father: He belongs to Him, to the Father, as the one in whom alone the

Church of the redeemed, filled with the Spirit, has communion with the Father,—a communion the reality of which beams from their countenances, so that the symbol of the Spirit, the dove, does not have the effect, as it so often has in other cases, of a mere useless piece of traditionalism.

But if the question which was previously treated regarding the absoluteness of our religion were to be taken up again at this stage, and were here narrowed down to the point, how we are to define the relation of the Revelation of God in Christ to other Revelations unknown to us that may perhaps be made, the answer would be no other than that which we gave before. As is well known, Rothe's speculation, in advance of the modern idea of an endless number of possible Revelations, indeed, it may well be said, exhibiting it in a profounder form at the earlier period, has already gone fully into the matter ; and to many an eye, blinded by looking out upon a world of worlds and pursuing an aimless search, that speculation may offer a welcome objective point. But we readily go quite too far beyond the bounds of human reason ; and that which is indispensable but also certain for faith, is readily mixed up with these uncertainties of bold speculation. Through the faith in God which He Himself works by means of Jesus, the sting is taken even from the most pressing questions as to whether His Revelation in Jesus may not be superseded by other Revelations that may perhaps be made, whether "the circle of light emanating from Jesus, in which we stand" (Troeltsch), may not pale before the light of the other orbs ; and further, as to how the unity of these Revelations and of those who bring them can be maintained by faith. For we believe in One God the Father Almighty ; and this faith has its ground and its norm

in Jesus, and through the Spirit of this One God it is living in the Church and in each individual. The questions referred to would trouble us only if we could not be certain by faith that we know God in His inmost essence ; i.e., however, as being in the qualitative sense unsurpassable (cf. pp. 237 f., 708 ff.).

By thus placing under Eschatology that idea of the Christian faith which is traditionally designated by the word Trinity, it is our object to avoid burdening and rendering insecure through obscure speculations the true Christian faith, in itself so clear and so firmly founded, quite as much as to give lively expression to the certain hope that in the consummation, our knowledge of God will also be perfected. Only this well-founded anticipation must not be carried so far as to become the unjustified idea that in the Consummation, the distinction between Divine and human knowledge will be altogether broken down. That would be to destroy the essence of our religion. Even the perfected children of God remain the creatures of their Creator. Still another misconception is here at the end for the last time to be guarded against, the opinion, namely, that knowledge is the chiefest element of eternal bliss. The nature of our God is love, not "theory". To that must correspond also the nature of our perfection, as has been set forth on the ground of principle.

We are thus led naturally to what is for us the only possible closing thought for the whole subject of Dogmatics. The Christian hope is no mere ornament of the Faith : it is an integral part of saving faith, is itself faith, trust, in prospect of the consummation (Romans VIII. 17 ff. ; Matt. v. 1 ff.). *But in conclusion we must return once more to the centre and foundation of this faith,*

which is filial communion with the living God of Holy Love in His Kingdom, with the God who in Christ is actively near us as holy love, and by the Holy Spirit actualizes this love in us.

The course we have followed has had many and often intricate byways. But as we proceeded, one simple truth should have become clearer and more certain; clear and certain as something inexhaustible and unsurpassable, than which those who in faith have begun to make it theirs can conceive nothing higher, nothing which more deeply answers to their inmost need, to the true end of their being which is now rightly understood by them only in its fulfilment. Did they conceive of anything higher, they must think of beings who have no relationship with themselves. But that would be to dream, and to deny what springs most directly from their own inmost nature; namely, that they need God and that they of themselves cannot find God, if He in gracious love come not to them. For only on penalty of madness could they pervert the fact of their existence to mean that they had made themselves, or that they owed their existence to an Infinite of which they assert less than they know to be in themselves. On the other hand, if they voluntarily recognize that fact, then in faith in the Gospel, in personal trust in the Father who comes to meet them in Jesus, in the gift of God and the acceptance of His gift, they find everything,—their blessedness, honour, freedom, real likeness to God.

In possession of this one simple but all-inclusive and inexhaustible treasure, as they bow with all reverence before God, they are elevated above the confused, uncertain temperament of the present time, of which we spoke at the beginning (pp. 1 ff.), and yet receptive as no others are of whatever in the present bears in it the

living seed of the future. This latter fact requires to be further emphasized, especially in one aspect of the matter: we have to remember all the immeasurable problems with which Christian Social Ethics finds itself confronted, though as yet its attitude towards them is often only interrogative and tentative. In Dogmatics, the individual in his relation to God readily comes to be uppermost in our thought, and not without justifiable cause in our religion which is so truly "personal". But how can sonship to God be spoken of except as viewed in connexion with the Kingdom of God! On that point we have left no doubt from the very first. Nor has there been any doubt on the matter that the Gospel has not "already" fully manifested its power, but has been able to develop it "only" for a period of two thousand years; though it is certain that it will not be perfectly carried out at all under the conditions of this earthly life: just for that reason, our Christian faith has become Christian hope.

And now at the end of this our long journey, not to repeat matter which has often been set forth, what at the very first we laid down as the aim of a work on Protestant Dogmatics which is clear as to its own nature, will have become evident. It has attained its end when for its own time, in the language of that time, it has borne testimony to the eternal Gospel. It lives only to die with its time, in order that the Gospel, as times change and pass away, may show itself to be the eternal Gospel. For its own time, however, it can bear testimony to that Gospel, only in proportion as it springs from an effective experience of it, from living faith, out of which it draws the humility and the courage that make it seek to set forth only what can really be experienced by faith. Only so far, but so far without fail, it has a share in the promise granted to that Gospel itself.

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An increasing desire for a statement of the relevant literature has been expressed, especially by those who use this book during the course of Academic study. I have gladly given effect to that desire, so far as the circumstances as a whole permitted. That means for one thing that I had to put the notices with regard to literature at the end, because otherwise I would have required to adopt the usual division into large and small sections with numbers and letters, a course which was not advisable. Further, I had to restrict those notices to a moderate amount; and in drawing them up, I have gratefully collated other essays of a like kind in recent expositions of the subject. Where more thorough-going study as regards the particular sections is contemplated, all that can really be done is to note in the first instance the literature which is amply set forth in any compendium, as e.g. that of Luthardt (10th ed., 1900), and to get to know from the works themselves which are there mentioned those of the previous authors, or the older bibliographies; and for the last decades, to consult the "Theologischer Jahresbericht". In the following presentation the recent general expositions of the subject are given at the outset, and there is no repeated mention of them in connexion with the particular doctrines: the short sketch of the Systematic Theology of the 19th century in the text, pp. 112 ff., may make one's use of them more profitable, so far as they are characterized there in being referred to the main schools of theology to which they belong. In the literature of the Reformation, we may point out only Ph. Melanchthon's Loci, 1521, and J. Calvin's Institutio Relig. Chr., 1559; in Lutheran Dogmatics Jo. Gerhard's Loci and J. G. Baier's Compendium; in Rationalistic Theology J. A. C. Wegscheider's Institutiones, 1815. In addition to these H. Schmid, Die Dogmatik der ev. luth. Kirche, 7 A. 1893, and A. Schweizer, Die Glaubenslehre der ev. ref. Kirche, 1844 ff.

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Pp. 603-611, on the fundamental points of view for the work of Christ (the Three Offices), cf. pp. 578-603. Th. Häring, Zur Versöhnungslehre 1893.

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